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BICCHERNA COVERS AND SIENESE TRECENTO SOCIETY: FIVE CASE STUDIES

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UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

**BICCHERNA COVERS AND SIENESE TRECENTO SOCIETY:
FIVE CASE STUDIES**

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of *Research Masters* has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Doctoral College Quality Sub-Committee.

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ABSTRACT

Marietta H. W. Klein Essink

BICCHERNA COVERS AND SIENESE TRECENTO SOCIETY: FIVE CASE STUDIES

In the study of trecento Sienese Biccherna covers several questions immediately arise: how and why did the iconographies of their figurative and inscriptive parts change and did the magistrates whose names appear as signatories to the tax returns influence the covers' commission. In five case studies, this dissertation shows that the hitherto stilted and formal representation of the Camarlengo around the early trecento changed into a narrative of topical social and religious events, thereby turning the covers into important primary civic sources of religious and social historical information. A close observation of the meaning of the narratives and their inscriptions highlights their significant contribution to the understanding that, as works of art, they were the result of an artistically valuable social transaction, involving the civic authorities and the people, their audience. The importance of the civic officials is conveyed by the fact that they were mentioned in conjunction with the figurative scenes, not for who they were. By emphasizing their civic function, the panels were part of Siena's collective civic tradition. Together, they formed part of her visual identity culture, identified by the many well-known works of art they reproduced. Therefore, the thesis would be confirmed in its effort to show that the officials of the Treasury office, in accordance with Siena's civic tradition, aspired to imitate images that were on show elsewhere in the city for the covers of their account books, images that would be well-known to the people. My research into these fascinating, though relatively unknown painted wooden panels that formed the front covers of the commune's tax records was greatly assisted by modern social historical scholarship, as well as a close in situ study at Siena's State Archives.

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INTRODUCTION

The late medieval financial management of the Italian city state of Siena has been well-documented. Scholars have examined the processes of her Treasury (the Biccherna) in detail and historians of Siena's social and religious structures have found a wealth of documentary information and evidence in the abundant State Archives. Less examined so far are the wooden painted panels that formed the front covers of the Treasury registers, the Biccherna and Gabella covers, and how their iconography assists an in-depth study of Siena's development over 400 years. This dissertation attempts to draw attention to these mostly secular panels and their semi-annual function (Fig. 1). More specifically, I shall deal with five trecento covers, as examples of a new development in composition, namely the introduction of a narrative figurative image, which either depicted events in the legend of a prominent local contemporary saint at that time, or were copies of prominent contemporary works and themes on display elsewhere in the city. A thorough study of the signatures on these five panels will be carried out, to ascertain how the persons represented by them may have influenced their commission. Most importantly, it shall be shown how Sienese Treasury Covers contributed to a larger expression of collective civic identity, not separate from, but part of the prevailing trends in trecento art-making, which emphasized a civic tradition and a replication of its iconographical types.

The first recorded, but lost cover was produced in 1257 and the first extant cover in 1258.¹ The last known and extant functional panel is dated 1458, exactly two hundred years later, after which they lost their practical use and were turned into decorative art

¹ Carla Zarrilli, "Amministrare con Arte. Il Lungo Viaggio delle Biccherna dagli Uffici al Museo," in *Le Biccherna di Siena: Arte e Finanza all'alba dell'economia moderna*, ed. Alessandro Tomei, Exhibition Catalogue (Rome: Retablo, 2003), 22, 30, 39, 94.

(quadri) for the walls of the Treasury offices in Siena's seat of government, the Palazzo Pubblico.²

A clear distinction should be made between the offices of the Biccherna and that of the Gabella. The first was established in the late 12th century, its name believed to have derived not from Siena's own feudal past, but from the Eastern Roman Empire and Constantinople, where the official imperial administrative offices of public finance and customs (the Blachaerne) were located.³ The Sienese Biccherna remained the sole administrative office until the 1270s, when the first fragmentary documentary evidence suggests that the establishment of a separate office, the Gabella, appears to have been firmly in place during the following century.⁴ Although the system of direct taxation was extensive and complex, it had become clear that the major source of income for the Commune was by indirect taxation – through the numerous *gabelles*, payments received mostly for activities originating outside of Siena's walls, in the contado, which were concerned with the provisioning of the city, such as for grain, wood and water.⁵ Around 1270, a separate Gabella office was established and its first Statutes drawn up in 1300.⁶ The first extant Gabella cover is dated 1291, depicting only names and heraldry of the Executors. Then followed an office scene dated 1307 and we now know of a further, undocumented, narrative panel, dated 1326 and dealt with in this dissertation. Both offices were overseen by a Camarlengo (Treasurer), who supervised the completion of the semi-annual tax accounts and their subsequent

² Enzo Carli, *Mostra delle Tavolette di Biccherna e di Altri Uffici dello Stato di Siena*, Exhibition Catalogue (Florence: Electra, 1950), 14.

³ Zarrilli, "Amministrare," 24.

⁴ Zarrilli, "Amministrare," 27, n. 27.

⁵ Zarrilli, "Amministrare," 27-29.

⁶ Tomei, *Le Biccherna*, 23-29.

presentation to the Consiglio, the State Government. In the Biccherna office, the Camarlengo was assisted by four Provveditore (Provisioners), whereas in the Gabella office this function was carried out by three Esecutore (Executors). By signing off on these accounts and having their names inscribed on the dated panels, they form a unique and primary historical source that has, to this day, been largely preserved in the museum of the Sienese State Archives. The last Biccherna quadro was painted in 1682.⁷

Biccherna and Gabella covers are in an extraordinary position for their ability to clarify cultural processes of government and the commissioning of art over a period of several centuries. Research is sometimes hampered by a lack of documentary evidence in archival records, their previous poor physical condition and unfortunate damage incurred during contemporary handling, nineteenth century cleaning and overpainting.⁸ However, it is a collection that attracts great interest from scholars and researchers in areas as diverse as social policy, religion, artistic practice, dress, country life, urban transformation, as well as technical disciplines, such as archival, paleographical, heraldic and linguistic practices, all of these characteristically Sienese.⁹

⁷ Alberto Cornice, "San Galgano nelle istituzioni senesi: comune, Opera del Duomo, Santa Maria della Scala. Il 'compagno di viaggio' nel percorso urbano della Via Francigena," in *Speciosa Imago, L'iconografia di san Galgano dal XIII al XVIII secolo*, ed. Andrea Conti. Convegno di Studi su 'L'iconografia' di San Galgano, Chiusdino, Italy, 13 May 2013 (Florence: Nuova Immagine, 2014), 45-56, 49, 50.

⁸ Tomei, *Le Biccherno*, 158.

⁹ Ubaldo Morandi, "Le Istituzione," in *Le Biccherno - Tavole dipinte delle Magistratura Senesi (secoli XIII-XVIII)*, ed. Luigi Borgia. (Roma: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Archivistici, 1984), 1. Exhibition Catalogue.

Research Aims

My research asks two questions: How did the iconography of the trecento figurative image in the composition of a Biccherna or Gabella cover change and was their commission influenced by the Provisioners, or Executors, whose names appeared on them? An attempt shall be made to show that at the beginning of the trecento there was a clear shift away from the hitherto executed rather static depiction of the Camarlengo. He began to take part in a narrative scene, in which the figures appeared to communicate. Additionally, through the study of the inscriptions and heraldry, an attempt shall be made to identify the historical figures hiding behind their unique signatures. This will then be examined in the context of Sienese social history of the trecento, in an effort to throw new light on aspects of the commune's society.

The position of Camarlengo (camerarius) is first recorded in 1127 and again in a Deed of Transfer dated 1138, when the castle of Radicofani was donated to the Bishop and commune of Siena.¹⁰ Possibly the most important person, with ultimate responsibility for the way the Biccherna and Gabella offices were run and directly answerable to the Sienese government (Il Consiglio), the Camarlengo oversaw the direct and indirect tax declaration processes. Elected by the government, he carried out his duties, assisted by his Provveditore (provisioners in the Biccherna) or Esecutore (Executors in the Gabella), for a period of six months. The two reporting semesters in any one year ran from January to June and July to December, at the end of which the relevant parchment registers were bound between two wooden (mostly poplar) panels, which were initially given a coded reference, such as a number, or a letter of the alphabet. However, the earliest extant panels increasingly displayed an image of

¹⁰ Morandi, "Le Istituzioni," 2.

the Camarlengo in office at that time, although these cannot be seen as portraits, as has been suggested. Until 1257, Camarlengi were members of the *Boni Homines*, reputable members of society, such as aristocracy, or the prosperous merchant class, such as traders, judges and notaries and depicted in a rather static, uncommunicative way (Fig. 2). However, in that year the government decided that the Camarlengo's position should preferably be carried out by a monk, in order to protect the integrity of the office.¹¹ This arrangement continued after 1287, the start of the new government of the Nove (the Nine), when the monks of the Abbey and Monastery of San Galgano, about 30 kilometres south-west of Siena, took this position exclusively. Although this important change endured for several years the depiction of the Camarlengo did not appear to be affected - it remained impersonal, flat, mostly just one man standing under a small architectural arch, in front of a large table.

The first case study, dated 1320, is the first panel that represents the important move away from the old iconography of the office scene. It changes into one of narrative communication, in this case between the Camarlengo Don Stefano, himself a monk of San Galgano and the saint. When dealing with these panels, an attempt shall be made to establish the motivation behind this change. Not only was the Camarlengo depicted in a dynamic narrative, but he became a monk on his knees, instead of a depiction of a layman, standing behind his table, sorting coins and making notes in a register.

Although he remained the most important civil servant in the Biccherna, after 1334 we increasingly see covers that became concerned with more diverse subject matter, such as with Sienese civic power and pride, matters of prestige and important works.

¹¹ Morandi, "Le Istituzione," 7.

Not long after the production of covers depicting the Camarlengo himself in the figurative scene, this method was abandoned altogether. The images on Biccherna, as well as Gabella covers became pre-occupied with urban development, social and political strategies and the development of her unique civic religion. However, the Camarlengo's name and sometimes coat-of-arms continued almost without exception to be shown in the inscription, together with those of the provisioners and executors.

Chapter One deals with a Biccherna panel and a Gabella panel, the first entitled *Don Stefano, monk of San Galgano, kneeling before the Saint*, dated 1320 and attributed to Guido Cinatti. Together with *The Punishment of the Envious*, dated 1326, also tentatively attributed to Guido Cinatti, they shall be shown to reflect this iconographical change, with scenes that relate to the legend of San Galgano and depicting the Camarlengo as a monk from the local Cistercian Abbey, venerating the saint.¹²

Chapter Two deals with three Gabella panels, namely *The Nativity*, dated 1334, by an anonymous artist, that of *Good Government*, or *The Common Good*, dated 1344, attributed to Ambrogio Lorenzetti and *The Presentation in the Temple*, dated 1357, by Luca di Tommè. These shall be shown to be examples of period topos, with strong contemporary references to the Virgin Mary in her role as Queen and Protectress of the City of Siena. Each depicts a motif that recurred in art of the period at other locations in the city and beyond, such as that executed by Simone Martini in Avignon and Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the Palazzo Pubblico, the Duomo and the Rotunda Chapel on Montesiepi and emphasized the strong contemporary and ambitious drive for new building and refurbishment work of religious and civic structures.

¹² Miklos Boskovits, "Una tavoletta senese del 1326 e alcune proposte per Guido Cinatti," *Arte Cristiana: Revista Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte e di Arti Liturgiche* 99 (2011): 415-422.

Methodology

This dissertation takes as its methodological paradigms the critical approaches of Iconography and Social Art History, in order to clarify cultural processes of government and to establish how these affected the commissioning of the Biccherna and Gabella covers. Apart from the study of these methods in their own literary sources, in-depth archival research in the Sienese State Archives and its museum has yielded significant information with regard to the meaning of the figurative elements of the covers, as well as their inscription and heraldry.

A Sienese Biccherna or Gabella cover has undergone very few changes in its formal organisation over the period of their production. Their unique arrangement in a relatively small format (ca. 40 x 25cm) includes a figurative image, an inscription of signatories and the date, as well as the relevant heraldry. Although their composition may sometimes have changed, these vital iconographical elements were always present and not affected by the new trecento iconographical preferences, as can be seen in two examples, two hundred years apart (Figs. 2 and 3). These elements are instrumental in revealing the panels' meaning and are, therefore, vital in shedding light on not only their own obscurity, but also on the often complicated organisation of the Sienese financial magistracy. We notice an increase in the spatial area allowed for the figurative element around the mid-1300s, when a preference for more narrative display appears to have firmly caught on. Around the same time, there is an increase in the number of heraldic devices from four to eight, after the government decided to reduce the semi-annual production of the panels to just one annual panel, thereby doubling the number of signatories and heraldic devices.

The Latin text was variously changed to the vernacular, dependent on the government in power. During the period under discussion, most of which under the government of the Nove (the Nine, 1287-1355), we see that the vernacular had firmly established itself and the position of Camarlengo was consistently carried out by monks of the Abbey of San Galgano. Monks were deemed to be more trustworthy, after some evidence of fraudulent behaviour among civic officials. The panels are their own primary source for dating and identification of signatories and allow for an accurate placement in time.

Iconography, the study of meaning in literature, as well as in art, was introduced by Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), although the word was first used in this context by Aby Warburg.¹³ Through a three-fold method of *Primary*, *Secondary* and *Intrinsic* meaning of content, it reveals the intention of an image through the word. This process ranges from a rather superficial interpretation, via an observation which assumes the viewer's familiarity with, or at least some knowledge of the practices and customs of a particular culture, to the meaning at the deepest level. This originates in biblical, allegorical or legendary sources. Panofsky's method is, therefore, a vital paradigmatic approach to the treatment of Biccherna and Gabella covers and reveals a rich and colourful Sienese visual and political culture during the trecento and quattrocento.

¹³ Erwin Panofsky, "Iconography and Iconology," in *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Donald Preziosi, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 220-235; Erwin Panofsky, "The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline," in *Art History and its Methods: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Eric Fernie (London: Phaidon Press, 1995), 184-195.

The first two case studies in this thesis not only deal with the trecento veneration of a local saint, San Galgano, but also with the enormous importance for the development of the city of the Abbey and Monastery by that name.¹⁴

The next three case studies show the significant emphasis placed on concepts of peace, justice and power under the protection of the Virgin Mary and the city state's efforts to compete with other city states, especially Florence, as depicted in art on display elsewhere. These objectives were regularly emphasized in the Treasury covers.

The panels' high exposure to the people, placed on shelves and in trunks in the Treasury offices for all to see, emphasized their visual accessibility and, through their iconography, made them as important as an altarpiece in the Duomo, or a sculpture in the Ospedale. The meaning in the figurative and inscriptive parts of Biccherna and Gabella covers, explained by Panofsky to be available at a deeper, or intrinsic level, was revealed to the viewer in accordance with his or her prior or more in-depth knowledge of the legendary or allegorical scenes they depicted.¹⁵ Of the biblical connotations they would be aware through their constant exposure to the teachings of the Church, while an allegorical understanding would have depended on their level of education. Political awareness would help them better understand the messages contained in the inscriptions. The relevant knowledge, or reception, by the average trecento visitor to the Biccherna or Gabella offices may safely be assumed to have been high. The Church and religion played a large part in their lives and a thorough knowledge of the Bible and the legends of saints will have existed. Once we bear this in

¹⁴ Cornice, "San Galgano...", 45-56; Ann Johns, "Cistercian Gothic in a Civic Setting: The Translation of the Pointed Arch in Sienese Architecture, 1250-1350," in *Art as Politics in Late Medieval and Renaissance Siena*, eds. Timothy Smith and Judith Steinhoff (Farnham UK and Burlington USA: Ashgate, 2012) 39-60.

¹⁵ Panofsky "The History of Art...", 184-195; Panofsky, "Iconography and Iconology...", 220.

mind, an *iconological* analysis reveals political and propagandist overtones in every Biccherna and Gabella image, produced over a period of several hundred years, as shall be shown.

A Social Art Historical approach is entirely supported by the wealth of modern scholarly literature that deals with the social, financial, economic and military organisation of the trecento Sienese commune and her contado, as well as her government's ambitious aims and objectives. It is well-documented, right down to housing, income, even painters' lives and pay. A critical social art historical approach becomes a tempting perspective through which to assess the research aims of this dissertation, explore iconographical narratives and find out more about the persons behind them. From a perspective of the visual arts, one could argue that it is exactly the political function that sets the covers apart from other painted works. Apart from the three Catalogues Raisonnés, few sources deal specifically with Treasury covers. Therefore, it is interesting and exciting to discover important events in Siena's social history in other sources and recognize them as narratives on the panels. Modern social and art historians, as well as archivists and diarists have contributed to forming a concise iconographical interpretation of these panels, as shown in the Literature Review.

In their PhD dissertations, Donna Baker (1998)¹⁶ and Laura Dobrynin (2012)¹⁷ both take a formal, iconographical and social historical approach to the role and depiction of the Camarlengo and the Provveditore in the figurative parts of the earliest thirteenth century panels. Baker does this by dealing exclusively with the so-called

¹⁶ Donna Baker, "The Artistic and Sociological Imagery of the Merchant Banker on the Book Covers of the Biccherna in Siena in the Early Renaissance," PhD Dissertation, University of Washington (Washington, 1998).

¹⁷ Laura Dobrynin, "Social Closure and the Arts in Late Medieval Siena," PhD Dissertation, Ohio University (Athens, 2012).

office scenes which she proposes to connect with the status of the merchant banker in the Sienese city state. Dobrynin argues a modernist approach of what she calls social closure (exclusion) by the various forms of government, mostly during the period before 1287, the year the Nine (the Nove) were established as the new Government. They both emphasize the perceived importance of these officials, either by having their image displayed like portraits on the covers, or by control of various social classes through exclusion over time, thereby availing themselves of rights and privileges through usurpation.¹⁸ This dissertation, however, will deal with five Biccherna and Gabella covers and argue that around 1320 there was a significant shift in the iconography, away from office scenes. This new depiction of a narrative of the Camarlengo's involvement in the scene reflected the specific aims, objectives and ideals of the government of the Nine.

Donna Baker's thesis deals with the iconography of the Camarlengo in mostly ducento office scenes and, specifically, with portraiture in this respect, which, she argues, underpins the importance of the merchant banker on "early Renaissance Biccherna covers". She further emphasizes his position after he enters the Sienese governmental environment as a significant representative of the merchant class and connects the importance of his status and wealth with usury and money-lending. She justifies this by the persistent display of money and money-handling on his desk. However, the dissertation fails in that, to date, no conclusive documentary evidence has been produced that confirms the identities of these Camarlengi on the covers by true likenesses and shows her assertions, interesting as they are, to be mostly speculative. Most examples are stock depictions of physiognomy in the Byzantine

¹⁸ Although Dobrynin sometimes makes proper reference to Baker, when she deals with the portrait question she does not and, therefore, gives the impression of owning the discovery.

style.¹⁹ It should also be noted that, although before 1287 some Camarlengi were of the merchant class and might have liked to promote their status in this way, most were judges and notaries, and while those might be seen as members of the merchant class, they did not trade and mostly worked in the city's magistracies. After 1287 they were predominantly Umiliati and Galganian monks. Other members of not only the professional classes, but also artisans and shopkeepers sometimes acted as Provveditore.²⁰ However, usury, which proportionally gets a lot of attention by Baker, was not practised by the State during the period covered. In fact, voluntary and forced loans to the State were more the norm.²¹ Baker's extensive formal dealings with images of avarice, money lending and usury, supported by seventeenth century Northern office scenes and Netherlandish depictions of money lenders are anachronistic and bear no relevance to *Biccherna* or *Gabella* covers, or their production.

In another example of how we might sometimes be tempted to endow our subject images with our own iconographical interpretations, Dobrynin applies a modernist approach of twentieth century social historical philosophy to argue social exclusion. Although she mostly deals with the earliest ducento panels, produced during a variety of governmental structures, the part of her thesis where dating overlaps with this dissertation is found in her chapter *The Biccherna and Gabella Book Covers and the Media Gente of the Nove*. In it, she mentions three *Gabella* covers that appear in this dissertation, taking only 26 out of a total of her 227 pages. Although strong in general social historical detail, the treatment of these covers lacks iconographical depth. By

¹⁹ Lightbown, "The Tavolette," 296.

²⁰ William M. Bowsky, *A Medieval Italian Commune – Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355*, (Berkeley, USA: University of California Press, 1981), *A Medieval Italian Commune – Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355*, (Berkeley, USA: University of California Press, 1981), 74.

²¹ Bowsky, *Finance*, 117.

that time the regime of the Nove was well-established and stable, making her argument rather less relevant. There cannot be any doubt that, over a period of almost 75 years, power of one socio/political group over another would exist in an era of ever-changing political hegemony, but comparing the Sienese forms of government during this period with 20th century political philosophy would be against the formal methods of periodicity. On the contrary and interestingly, it could be argued that during the trecento the Nove strived for a consistent system of circumstances that would work to the advantage of the state, to its functioning in a way that would benefit all. Their regime, in fact, was a form of flexible democracy, where several groups, seemingly at either end of the spectrum and at various times, would work together for the common good. Thirty years earlier, William Bowsky is explicit when he argues in favour of the principles of the Nine and actually refers to and contradicts earlier historians (some of whom are Dobrynin's sources), who have postulated that hostility might have arisen from a class-conscious nobility. He shows that for the duration of the government of the Nove a system of overlap in social status was allowed and encouraged, even the recall of excluded social groups, if it ensured the continuity of policy and enhanced and benefited the good and security of the state and the people (*ben comun*).²² An example of this is dealt with in this dissertation's first case study and the administrative confusion around the time of the 1318 uprising, when butchers (*carnaioli*), judges and notaries were excluded and their Guilds outlawed, causing chaos in the commune's legal and financial systems. Bowsky also emphasized the introduction of the modern device of the Public Defender, a judge for the poor.²³

²² William M. Bowsky, *A Medieval Italian Commune – Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355*, (Berkeley, USA: University of California Press, 1981), 64.

²³ Bowsky, *A Medieval*, 70, 72, 73, 78, 80, 110.

Neither thesis delivers a comprehensive study of the more complex fourteenth century covers – a gap my research intends to fill. This dissertation deals with a significant change in trecento iconography of the Camarlengo and the question why office scenes were increasingly replaced by depictions of important events in Sienese society, as well as the signatories' influence on the commission.

In-depth archival research in the Siena State Archives formed the key to unlocking the information contained in the identities of the Camarlengo, the Provveditore and Esecutore. The extent of the Archives' rich documentary resources covering more than 700 years allows for a close study of the families, their position in society and their possible motivation for commissioning a particular artist to paint a particular iconography of life in Siena at a particular time. There are in excess of one hundred preserved covers kept in the State Archives. There is wide diversity in their quality, artistically as well as in their state of conservation. They were painted by artists who have long disappeared into the oblivion of ages past and by well-known names that still ring true today and who were also deeply involved in other works. Apart from the unique collection in the Archives' museum, some panels can be found in collections in the United Kingdom (Chatsworth, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the British Library), as well as in the archives of collections held in the United States, Germany, Hungary, Belgium and the Netherlands.

When dealing with the names in the inscriptions, particular attention needs to be drawn to that process. The effort to shed light on families and their individual identities has proven to be a confusing and laborious process, partly due to the ambiguity of archival records, as corroborated by William Bowsky and concealment of

facts, argued by Agnolo di Tura.²⁴ Spelling and dating changed frequently, family names (patronyms) were rarely used, only for formal documents and then by the wealthy noble or merchant families only. Often, there is no indication of what the surname might have been. Individuals appeared as sons of fathers, or nephews of uncles, such as Ceccho di Bindo, or Andreuccio di Tuccio. Sometimes only a nickname is given. It is not until the discovery of Robert Lightbown's significant article (1963) that we find mention of the registers compiled for Galgano Bichi in 1724.²⁵ These are not used by Luigi Borgia or Alessandro Tomei, both editors of the two most important catalogues raisonnés and sources for this study.²⁶ Bichi was an archivist in the Sienese State Archives and his registers reveal interesting and often more accurate variations. None deal significantly with the iconography of these inscriptions.

The consistent use of the two catalogues raisonnés mentioned resulted in a transcription of the texts by Borgia, a translation of that text and a verification of the heraldry in each case. This process is demonstrated extensively in the first case study only, in order to illustrate this tenuous *modus operandi*. The subsequent case studies will only give Borgia's transcription, its translation and describe the coats-of-arms in English, with the Italian version in the footnotes, followed by treatment of names only when important information has been discovered. This method greatly contributes to the readability of this section of the dissertation and allows for a deeper discussion of specific details pertaining to the names, as and when they occur.

²⁴ Bowsky, *A Medieval...*, 74, 75, 89; Agnolo, "Cronaca Senese attribuita ad Agnolo di Tura del Grasso detta la cronaca maggiore," in *C.S.*, 547-548.

²⁵ Ronald W. Lightbown, "The Tavolette di Biccherne of Siena", in *The Journal of the Society of Archivists* II (1963) 292-301.

²⁶ Luigi Borgia, ed. *Le Biccherne - Tavole dipinte delle Magistrature Senesi (secoli XIII- XVIII)*, Exhibition Catalogue. (Roma: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Archivistici, 1984); Alessandro Tomei, ed. *Le Biccherne di Siena; Arte e Finanza all'alba dell'economia moderna* (Roma: Retablo, 2003). Exhibition Catalogue.

The treatment of iconographical narrative in Treasury covers, so tentatively introduced during the trecento, arguably set a continuing trend for that of panels of the following century. Although beyond the scope and period of this dissertation, here it is worth noting that during the quattrocento this process was well-underway and almost all Treasury covers showed highly developed narratives. In a fascinating contribution as co-editor of the catalogue for the most recent exhibition of Sienese art in the National Gallery in London (2007-2008), Fabrizio Nevola argued the influence of private patronage on civic identity, through the representation of human interaction with architectural structures, in a Biccherna quadro dated 1460 by Francesco di Giorgio Martini.²⁷ Five years later, Judith Steinhoff used the same panel, when she paid attention to the representation of Sienese urban structures and the way they communicated political rivalry between the various government factions, or between the Church and the State.²⁸ They both dealt specifically with this late Biccherna quadro in a way that a later, more substantial and in-depth monographic study would deal with many.

²⁷ Fabrizio Nevola, "Civic Identity and Private Patrons in Renaissance Siena," in *Renaissance Siena – Art for a City*, ed. Luke Syson (London: National Gallery, 2007), 17-29. Exhibition Catalogue.

²⁸ Judith Steinhoff, "Urban Images and Civic Identity in Medieval Sienese Painting," in Timothy Smith and Judith Steinhoff eds. *Art as Politics in Late Medieval and Renaissance Siena* (Farnham UK and Burlington USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 15-38.

Literature Review

Primary sources that deal with trecento Treasury panels are fragmented and none deal specifically with iconographical content, or its changes, the research aim of this dissertation. Apart from some anecdotal details in notes and diary entries found during the early eighteenth century, there are some early twentieth century exhibition records by Alessandro Lisini and Luigi Lazzeri, made while active at the Siena State Archives.²⁹ These are steadfastly referred to by later twentieth century scholars, but do not otherwise appear to contribute to a significant discourse. In addition to the two important exhibitions curated by Borgia and Tomei and mentioned above, that curated by Enzo Carli in 1950 should be included in the significant yield of specific descriptions of Treasury covers in its catalogue raisonn  .³⁰ However, even their attempts at a connoisseurial approach are often hampered by a lack of ultimately secure attributions and steer well clear of involvement in arguments of artistic value and visual materiality. The Sienese State Archives' museum, opened in 1858 for the collection and restoration of as many covers as possible after several hundred years of unknown dispersal, has a twenty-first century presence on the Internet, with a chronological record of covers held at its own premises. It excludes the panels kept at foreign locations, where some of the most significant are on view.³¹

Enzo Carli's *Mostra delle Tavolette di Biccherna e di Altri Uffici dello Stato di Siena* (1950), was held at the Sienese State Archives in the Palazzo Piccolomini and at the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence. Very brief formal descriptions and attempts at attribution

²⁹ Alessandro Lisini, *Mostra dell'Arte Antica Senese*, Exhibition Catalogue (Siena: 1904); Luigi Lazzeri, *La Sala della Mostra e il Museo della Tavolette dipinte della Biccherna e della Gabella* (Siena: R. Archivio di Stato, 1911).

³⁰ Enzo Carli, *Mostra delle Tavolette di Biccherna e di Altri Uffici dello Stato di Siena* (Florence: Electra, 1950), Exhibition Catalogue.

³¹ Borgia, "Topographical Index of the Works," in *Le Biccherne...*, 385.

give us a monochrome overview of the collection held at the Archives' museum, before any major conservation work was carried out for the later exhibitions. John Pope-Hennessy, in his 1950 review of Carli's exhibition in *The Burlington Magazine* refers in the very first sentence to "a branch of art known hitherto only to specialists".³² His mainly formal appraisal, however brief, is the first independent review of a major exhibition of Biccherna and Gabella covers. As curator and connoisseur, working with Ronald Lightbown at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, he would have been aware of the three covers acquired by the museum in the latter half of the 19th century. In his review, Pope-Hennessy concurs with most of Carli's attributions, but quite strongly disputes others. It is largely due to their obscurity that, to this day, secure attributions of the panels are rare. It should be noted that there is no record of any other work by Pope-Hennessy on Biccherna covers. A comprehensive list of his 83 articles on Italian Renaissance art does not mention any such work.³³

The next major exhibition, curated by Luigi Borgia, was again held on the State Archives' own premises, in 1984. Its catalogue raisonné of that date is a wealth of information, with not only significant scholarly contributions, but full-sized colour reproductions of many Biccherna and Gabella covers, in chronological order. This work has become one of this dissertation's most important sources, especially when dealing with the signatories. The text is well-organised, with dating, present location, transposition of Latin (and later vernacular) text into print and an attempt at an iconographical interpretation of the figurative element in the images, however

³² John Pope-Hennessy, "Review of an Exhibition of Biccherna Covers," in *The Burlington Magazine* 92, 572 (1950): 320.

³³ "Inventory of the works by John Pope-Hennessy", in *Regesta Imperii - Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur* (Mainz, Germany: 2016) <https://www.regesta-imperii@adwmainz.de>.

superficial. Where available, an attribution is made. The contributors to this publication are all scholars, who have close connections with the Sienese State Archives, having either spent some time during their career working there, or are still working there. Luigi Borgia (1941 -) is a respected specialist in archival studies and palaeography in the field of the arts of the Italian Renaissance. He has published multiple books, journal and newspaper articles and holds membership of most high-profile professional organisations in Italy in his field. Borgia's career spans many years in the Archives of Arezzo and Florence. His in-depth knowledge of the history of Tuscany through her well-preserved city archives makes him a consistent point of reference and contributor in publications pertaining to this subject. Borgia's contributory essay on the subject of Heraldry, one of his specialisms, is of invaluable significance for the research.

Borgia's work is superseded by that of the last major specialist exhibition of Biccherna and Gabella covers (2003) that started in Rome, travelled to Washington and back to Siena and Brussels. Its catalogue raisonné, curated by Alessandro Tomei, has already been mentioned and is a welcome follow-up. It is particularly helpful in understanding the continuing development of international interest in Sienese Treasury covers. While Tomei clearly sees a formal example in Borgia's work, some significant differences nonetheless exist. It includes many new contributory essays, by new specialists, some of whom are active at the Sienese State Archives to this day. His extensive chronological Bibliography contains citations going back to the earliest documentary and anecdotal references and helps form an overview of available scholarly literature, a source lacking in Borgia's catalogue. However, in spite of the abundance of available archival material, the short explanatory notes on each panel

still appear to give a surprising lack of iconographic information and we still miss secure attributions and more thorough dealing with unfortunate cleaning activity, some of which has erased significant and vital iconographical and semiotic evidence.

The rich collection of secondary social historical sources by mainly twentieth and twenty-first century scholars informs the second methodology, the Social History of Art. Possibly the most prolific sources of Sienese social history would be the works by William M. Bowsky.³⁴ They cover every single aspect of the city state's society during the reign of the Nove and beyond. It could be argued that the detailed accounts of the often complicated organisation of the Sienese financial magistracy, as provided in Bowsky's *Finance of the Commune of Siena, 1287-1355* (1970), or in *A Mediaeval Italian Commune: Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355* (1981) throw light on the question of the relative obscurity of its Biccherna covers and help reveal the city's social history in the panels' figurative formal arrangements. Indeed, these works are but two of a number of important sources for the study of the organisation of the Sienese city commune. Their publication is the result of many years of research in the Sienese and Florentine state archives, meticulously referenced by many later scholars. Where Bowsky's work disappoints is in a lack of specific reference to Biccherna covers. When dealing with the Treasury's activities, it could arguably be considered impossible for him not to have come across the existence of these panels. Bowsky is, therefore, one of many scholars of the Sienese Late Medieval and Renaissance periods, who have, either intentionally or unintentionally, ignored them.

³⁴ William M. Bowsky, "The Buon Governo of Siena (1287-1355): A Mediaeval Italian Oligarchy," *Speculum* 37 (1962): 368-381; Bowsky, "The Impact of the Black Death upon Sienese Government and Society," *Speculum* 39 (1964): 1-34; Bowsky, *The Finance of the Commune of Siena, 1287-1355*, English edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970); Bowsky, "The Anatomy of Rebellion in Fourteenth Century Siena: From Commune to Signory," in *Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian Cities, 1250-1500*, ed. Lauro Martines (Berkeley: University of California, 1972); Bowsky, *A Mediaeval Italian Commune: Siena under the Nine, 1287-1355* (Berkeley, USA: University of California Press, 1981).

The same cannot be said for Hayden Maginnis, whose highly informative work *The World of the Early Sienese Painter* (2001) is the first contemporary work that gives us close insight into the lives of trecento painters and their processes.³⁵ While his earlier literary review of publications on trecento Sienese painting does not mention Biccherna covers,³⁶ this seminal work does. It is, therefore, the only work of that nature that we know of. He appears to be the first scholar, who pays attention to the Sienese need for embellishment in general, in which he includes the decoration of the book covers. He draws attention to the decorative art, as executed on banners, wedding chests (cassone) and trays, candle holders, all frequently commissioned and desired in Sienese society. In Chapter IV, for instance, he deals extensively with painters and their “Major and Minor” commissions, such as work for the commune, the cathedral, the Ospedale Santa Maria della Scala and private patronage. In ranking the Treasury covers for the financial magistracies as carried out by “minor masters”, it is interesting to note that work on those panels sometimes appears to have been carried out by as many as three artists, each with specialist skills in such areas as figurative painting, Gothic script and heraldry, as if this work was part of their training. Maginnis’s work should be seen as a significant example of social art history and a rich source of the private and professional lives of painters, their work, property and pay. Curiously, although Appendices III and IV deal extensively with payments to Biccherna painters, there never appears to be a direct reference to a specific cover and its artist. In that, we may assume Maginnis experienced the same lack of documentary evidence in respect of these payments, recorded in the registers, but not related to the actual

³⁵ Hayden Maginnis, *The World of the Early Sienese Painter* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001).

³⁶ Hayden Maginnis, “The Literature of Sienese Trecento Painting 1945-1975”, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 40 (1977): 276-309.

work done.³⁷ Therefore, although richly informative, the work sadly misses an opportunity, even at this relatively late stage, to create more emphasis on the cultural value of the Treasury covers as a fascinating, dated, chronologically uninterrupted source of social historical and political information over a period of several hundred years and which underwent such an important change during the trecento.

After several references to the rich and well-preserved Sienese State Archives and their interest to the student of Biccherna and Gabella covers, attention is drawn to Ronald Lightbown's work.³⁸ An Italian Renaissance documents scholar, connoisseur and one-time curator of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, he leads the way in interpreting these specific sources in a lucid and organised manner. His article not only places Siena in the context of the prevailing ruling status of the independent Tuscan city states of the fourteenth century, it most significantly sheds light on the way the Biccherna office operated and, more precisely, how the organisation of administrative activities resulted in, in his words, "a natural and satisfactory formal expression of a refined and delicate art", namely the painted covers of their account books. He incontrovertibly shows that, were it not for the fact that the most important officials, the Camarlengo, Provisioners and Executors, took to commissioning artists to paint the wooden covers, the Biccherna would not have enjoyed its posthumous celebrity. In dealing with the rich history of the covers, Lightbown draws on some of the earliest eighteenth and nineteenth century sources, such as diaries and notes, inspiring the researcher to dig deeper. Lightbown's allusion to the eighteenth century archivist

³⁷ Maginnis, *The World...*, 279: An interesting entry, but also illustrative of this problem is a reference to a payment on 2 March 1294 "to Duccio who is paid 10 soldi for painting the books of the treasurer and the Four" [ASS, Biccherna 110, fol. 116v.] and the same again in 1295..

³⁸ Lightbown, "Le Tavolette," 292-301.

Galgano Bichi has proven to be of significant help in arguing some of the research aims of this dissertation.³⁹ Especially Bichi's close attention to the names of the signatories on the Treasury panels, their frequent inaccuracies and his replacements with other names, have enabled the writer to gain some interesting and revealing insights into the families. One of the most important discoveries in this respect was found in Diana Norman's journal article *The Commission for the Frescoes of Montesiepi* (1993).⁴⁰ Her treatment of Vanni Salimbeni's will and testament of 1340 has thrown important light on his grandson, a signatory on the 1357 *Presentation* or *Circumcision* panel, one of this dissertation's case studies. His likely involvement as patron in the execution of the fresco cycles in the Rotunda Chapel on Montesiepi on behalf of his grandfather was an exciting and significant discovery. Norman's prolific contributions to trecento Sienese art are often cited in this dissertation, but one other important contribution needs to be specifically mentioned here, that of her extensive treatment of Duccio's *Maestà* (1309) in *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art, Society and Religion 1280-1400* (1995), which has assisted when dealing with the same Gabella panel, in arguing the eucharistic elements in the iconography of the figurative element on this panel.⁴¹

It is likely that the average citizen of the Sienese commune was familiar with the names of the powerful families, their occupations and their participation in the magistracies. It is exactly this specific political 'eye' that sets the Treasury covers apart from other painted works in the city. For them, the iconography of the images on the panels revealed a rich and recognizable visual culture. The city government's

³⁹ Archivio di Stato Siena, Ms. A 87 – Quattro Provveditori della Generale Biccherna qui raccolti per ordine e disposizione dell'III. Mo. Sig. Abb. Galgano Bichi, 1725; Ms. A 88 – Catalogo de' riseduti nel Magistrato degl'Esecutori di Gabella qui raccolti per ordine e disposizione dell'III. Mo. Sig. Abb. Galgano Bichi, anno 1725.

⁴⁰ Diana Norman, "The Commission for the Frescoes of Montesiepi," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 56 (1993): 289-300.

⁴¹ Diana Norman, " 'A Noble Panel': Duccio's *Maestà*", in *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art, Society and Religion 1280-1400, II Case Studies*, ed. Diana Norman (New Haven & London: Yale University Press in association with The Open University, 1995), 55-82.

significant emphasis on the concepts of peace and justice permeated the way the commune operated in every direction and an iconographical analysis often reveals political and propagandist overtones in many Treasury images.

CASE STUDIES

Chapter One - *The Cult of San Galgano*

This chapter deals with a Biccherna and a Gabella cover, which both serve to illustrate the main argument of this thesis, namely that the beginning of the trecento saw a change in their figurative iconography, from an office scene to a narrative scene. This appears to have coincided with the time that the cult of San Galgano came to its full development. Both studies depict fundamental representations of events from the saint's legend. Much depicted in Sienese painting, sculpture and architecture in the first half of the trecento, the local saint had high visibility around the city.⁴² San Galgano was seen as one of the *Santi Giovane* and often displayed together with Saints Ansano and Giuliano.⁴³

In a critical assessment of literary sources on the Legend of San Galgano, Eugenio Susi has attempted to throw light on a confusing and arduous task of identifying an original and reliable source.⁴⁴ He refers to all relevant sources studied by him.⁴⁵ After commenting that this legend must be the "most extremely complex and fragmented",⁴⁶ he nevertheless speculatively lists three critically edited sources, the last of which very likely informed by notes left by an anonymous Augustinian monk,

⁴² Cornice, "San Galgano...", 45.

⁴³ Cornice, 48.

⁴⁴ Eugenio Susi, "La Vita beati Galgani del Codice Laurenziano" plut. 90, sub. 48 in *Benedictina* 39, (1992): 317-340.

⁴⁵ Susi, "La Vita ...", 319, n.2: "Su san Galgano: G. Lombardelli, *Vita del gloriosissimo san Galgano senese da Chiusdino* (Siena: 1577); A. Carezano, *Vita e miracoli di san Galgano confessore dell'Ordine eremitano di sant'Agostino e discepolo di san Guglielmo*, (Pisa: 1614); S. Razzi, *Vite de'santi e beati toscani de'quali infino a oggi comunemente si ha cognizione* (Firenze: 1627); A. Libandri, *Vita del glorioso san Galgano, eremita cistercense* (Siena: 1645); L. Torelli, *Vita del glorioso san Galgano, eremita agostiniano, in Secoli agostiniani*, IV (Bologna: 1675) 90-99; D. Colucci, *Ristretto della vita, virtù e miracoli del glorioso san Galgano Guidotti da Chiusdino* (Siena: 1764); P. Rossi, *Breve compendio della vita di san Galgano di Chiusdino* (Siena: 1780); L. Feroni, *Compendio della vita di san Galgano* (Firenze: 1835); P. Gardini, *Cenni della vita di san Galgano Guidotti, eremita* (Bologna: 1870); G.S. Costantini, *Vita di san Galgano* (Chiusdino: 1904), 2nd ed.; R. Arbesmann, "The three earliest Vitae of St. Gaganus," in *Didascalies. Studies in honour of Anselm M. Albareda* (New York: 1961); R. Volpini, "Galgano," in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, VI (Roma: 1965) 2-6; F. Cardini, *San Galgano e la spada nella roccia* (Siena: 1982)."

⁴⁶ Susi, "La Vita...", 317: "un fenomeno peraltro estremamente complesso e frammentato in una molteplicità di esperienze".

critically edited by him and deemed the most significant edition of the events in the legend.⁴⁷

In this critical assessment, Susi gives an abbreviated Italian version of the legend and appends the original Latin Augustinian text. He notes Galgano's birth in Chiusdino, in the valley of the river Merse in the diocese of Volterra, his low aristocratic descent and how the young fatherless Galgano tells his mother of a dream in which he saw the archangel Michael, who told him to abandon his life as a warrior and dedicate himself to God. In accordance with Michael's instructions, he rides through the forest on Montesiepi, close to his birthplace, where, in order to pray, he uses his sword as a cross. When wishing to continue his journey, he is unable to remove the cross from the ground and realises that this is where he must stay. This is, therefore, the moment of his conversion and the subject of the first case study (1320). Apart from one short excursion to Rome and away from his hermitage, he does not leave it until his death toward the end of 1185.⁴⁸ At this point Susi gives no other details of the legend. Therefore, it would appear that the Augustinian version, detailed as it is, relates to the attack on Montesiepi in his absence, but omits the actual punishment of the *invidiosi* after their attack on Montesiepi, the subject of the second panel in this chapter (1326).

Susi states that large parts of Galgano's biographies are still unedited and unpublished. Apart from the three edited texts quoted, he separately refers to Fedor Schneider's published record of the "*inquisitio in partibus*", allegedly collected by three

⁴⁷ Franco Cardini, *San Galgano e la spada nella roccia* (Siena: 1982); A. Degl'Innocenti, "La Leggenda di S. Galgano in una raccolta agiografica trecentesca", Laurenziano Plut. XX 6, in *Miscillo Flamine. Studi in onore di Carmelo Rapisarda*, ed. A. Degl'Innocenti e D. Moretti, (Trento: 1997), 139-151 and Eugenio Susi, "La Vita beati Galgani del Codice Laurenziano" plut. 90, sub. 48 in *Benedictina* 39 (1992): 317-340.

⁴⁸ Susi, "La Vita," 317.

papal representatives, who travelled to Montesiepi in an effort to collect information about Galgano before his canonisation in 1185 and spoke to Galgano's mother Dionezia.⁴⁹ For the purposes of this dissertation, the Galgano panels are treated in accordance with the Susi and Cardini versions, the most reliable according to Susi. Further study of all sources looked at by him will certainly highlight more inconsistencies in the descriptions of events. Apart from those noted above, in the treatment of the *Punishment of the Invidiosi* he notes the issue of the cross, which could not be removed from the earth (massa or terra), but has nevertheless gone forth into history as stuck in a rock.⁵⁰

The Cistercian Abbey of San Galgano, founded in the saint's honour in the twelfth century, became a most significant institution in the development of the city state during the reign of the Nove. Ann Johns has shown that by the fourteenth century the monks, who were experts in hydraulic engineering, became instrumental in the design and execution of such important civic construction works as the fonti and bottini, the major system of tunnels and fonts, bringing up water to the city on the hills.⁵¹ The Abbey had come to great renown and her monks, also much in demand as administrators and judges, held major positions in several magistracies of the Sienese government. Although they were recorded as Camarlengi since the late thirteenth century, it is not until 1320, the date of the first case study, that the firm establishment of the Abbey as a strong institutional and cultural link to the administrative offices of the city state became a reality and that San Galgano found his way on to Treasury

⁴⁹ F. Schneider, "Der Einsiedler Galgan von Chiusdino und die Anfänge von S. Galgano, *Analecta toscana*, IV" in *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* XVII (1914-1924): 61-77.

⁵⁰ Susi, "La Vita", 322.

⁵¹ Ann Johns, "Cistercian Gothic in a Civic Setting: The Translation of the Pointed Arch in Sienese Architecture, 1250-1350" in *Art as Politics in Late Medieval and Renaissance Siena*, eds. Timothy Smith and Judith Steinhoff (Farnham UK and Burlington USA: Ashgate, 2012), 39-60.

covers, depicting the Camarlengi on their knees in adoration, showing the new narrative change.⁵² It could be argued that the two panels belong together and are witness to the increasing importance of the Cult of San Galgano, at the same time that the close connection between the Abbey and the city's governmental institutions asserted itself. The main emphasis in Johns' article, however, lies on the contention that the style of the local Cistercian monastery, namely that of the Burgundian Gothic of the Cistercians in France, is apparent not only in the architecture of the Abbey of San Galgano, but that of other subsequent building programmes in the city's major architectural development during the ducento and trecento, such as that of the Palazzo Pubblico and the fonte. She argues that the Cistercians developed an ecclesiastic style (French Gothic), but adapted that into a modular, pared-down, more utilitarian and institutional one, which could be adapted to local taste and availability of materials. She asserts that the government of the Nine, always striving for improvement and modernisation, considered the Cistercian architecture a visual signifier of a unified, cohesive community.⁵³ This very close involvement with civic life is clearly reflected in all trecento Biccherna and Gabella panels, where most Camarlengi were Cistercian monks, whether they appeared themselves, or not. If we consider that, we can see that their commission was very likely influenced by the monks.

Alberto Cornice's contributory article in *Speciosa Imago* takes us on a journey through Siena and in particular along the Via Francigena (Via Romana), the original road taken by pilgrims from France to Rome.⁵⁴ In it, he refers to two Biccherna covers,

⁵² Cornice, "San Galgano...", 50.

⁵³ Johns, "Cistercian Gothic...", 40.

⁵⁴ Cornice, "San Galgano...", 45-56.

one the first extant dated 1258, the other this dissertation's first case study of 1320, albeit summarily. He points at the many late medieval and Renaissance iconographical references to Galgano in architecture, sculpture and painting, on a trajectory that stretches from the Duomo to the Porta Romana and emphasizes his importance. His article appears among several others in this anthology that deal with aspects of the saint's legend and the subsequent development of his cult in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These question on the one hand the accuracy and veritability of the way his life has been recorded, the process of how a legend is turned into a cult, as well as the adaptation to local circumstances in this process, leading to the actual establishment of the cult and its discourse, no longer questioning its impediments. However, the production of documentary evidence of either the saint's life or his legend remains problematic and Eugenio Susi's in-depth study into the many sources, none of which lead to a secure and identifiable version of the legend, is revealing.⁵⁵ Whether the saint was a conflation of several individuals, providing yet another feather in Siena's cap in her competitive battles for supremacy with other Tuscan city communes, is a question that remains unanswered.

The first case study, a Biccherna cover by Guido Cinatti, *Don Stefano, monk of San Galgano, kneeling before the Saint*, dated 1320, contained the register for January to June. It measures 38 x 25cm and is held at the Sienese State Archives (Fig. 4). Its figurative image is the first in a series of images on Treasury covers that depict the important change to a narrative, the first five of which will be dealt with in this dissertation. It depicts the moment of San Galgano's conversion, his essential act of

⁵⁵ Eugenio Susi, "Il dossier agiografico di san Galgano: uno status quaestionis," in *Speciosa Imago, L'iconografia di san Galgano dal XIII al XVIII secolo*, ed. Andrea Conti. Convention Catalogue. Convegno di Studi su 'L'iconografia' di San Galgano, Chiusdino, Italy, 13 May 2013 (Florence: Nuova Immagine, 2014), 17-44; Eugenio Susi, "La Vita Beati Galgani del Codice Laurenziano Plut. 90. Sup. 48," in *Benedictina* (Roma, 1992), 317-340.

faith referred to in his legend, witnessed by Don Stefano, the Camarlengo, who shows his strong devotional connection to the saint by sinking to his knees, while watching this scene.

The attempt at identification of the provisioners and executors through the study of their inscriptions shall be dealt with first, in order to assess their possible influence on the commission. As indicated earlier, the method used for the next four case studies will be limited to a transcript of the original text and a translation, comparisons with Galgano Bichi's registers and any other significant findings that shed light on their identities. Borgia publishes a transcript of the Don Stefano text as follows:

LIBRO DI DONO ISTEFANO MONACO DI SANTO GALGANO, ANDREUCIO DI TUCIO, LEONCINO DE'MACONI, GUALTIERI DI MISSERE RENALDO, CIONE DI MISSERE MINO ROSSO, CAMARLENGO E QATRO (sic) DEL COMUNE DI SIENA DA CALENDE GIENAIIO ANNI MCCCXVIII. INFINO A CALENDE LUGLIO ANNI .MCCCXX. PODESTÀ CONTO UGHO DA BATE FOLLE.

BOOK . OF DON . STEFANO . MONK . OF . SAN GALGANO . ANDREUCIO . DI TUCCIO . LEONCINO . OF MACONI . GUALTIERI . OF MASTER . RENALDO . CIONE . OF MASTER . MINO ROSSO . CAMARLENGO . AND FOUR (sic) . OF THE COMMUNE . OF SIENA . DATED . JANUARY. YEAR . M.CCC.XVIII . UNTIL . JULY . YEAR . M . CCC . XX . PODESTÀ . COUNT . HUGO . D'ABATE . FOLLE .⁵⁶

When dealing with the coats-of-arms on this panel, Borgia notes that they represent those of the Podestà, Conte Ugo di Battifolle, and next to it those of the Provisioners for that particular semester, Andreuccio di Tuccio, Leoncino Maconi, Gualtieri Rinaldini and Cione di Mino Rosso.⁵⁷ This description shows some important deviations from the original, such as Renaldo (which would be a first name), to RINALDINI, a family name and Leoncino DE'Maconi. In addition, the name of the Podestà, Conte Ugo di Battifolle,

⁵⁶ Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 87. Original text on the panel, listing the Camarlengo and Provveditore appointed for the first semester of 1320, followed by a translation by the author of the original text.

⁵⁷ Patrizia Sinibaldi's transcription of the text in Borgia, *Le Biccherno*, 78.

appears to be different. Other scholars leave the transcription of the original text unchanged.⁵⁸

This panel is arguably at once the most well-known and the most ambiguous. It is one of the most prominent panels on display in the State Archives' museum and the subject of numerous publications and presentations. Strangely, in spite of its flagship status, there are no records of this cover, or of its contents register, in the Sienese State Archives, or anywhere else.

In his 1963 article, Ronald Lightbown draws attention to the Sienese antiquary Galgano Bichi, who took it upon himself in 1724 to have every extant Biccherna and Gabella cover held at the Sienese State Archives, where he worked at that time, recorded with their inscriptions, heraldry and relevant dates.⁵⁹ This resulted in two manuscript registers, available for perusal in the archives.⁶⁰ Compiled by a scribe, they only cover Biccherna and Gabella panels and these two registers shall be quoted repeatedly when trying to clarify names. Interestingly, careful study of Bichi's manuscripts reveals that the cover, as well as the full register for the subject semester in 1320 appear to be missing. However, Bichi records an entry for 1319 for the first semester. We, therefore, find that the date of this particular panel, as recorded in Bichi's registers, differs from all subsequent publications, as do the names of almost every provisioner. He records the name of the Camarlengo as Don Stefano di San Galgano, a Cistercian monk. He then lists the names of the Provisioners as Andreuccio

⁵⁸ Maria Assunta Ceppari Ridolfi "Don Stefano monaco di San Galgano inginocchiato davanti al Santi," in *Le Biccherne di Siena; Arte e Finanza all'alba dell'economia moderna*, ed. Alessandro Tomei. Exhibition Catalogue (Roma: Retablo, 2003), 134 – 136; Enzo Carli, ed. *Mostra delle Tavolette di Biccherna e di Altri Uffici dello Stato di Siena*, (Florence: Electra, 1950), 33. Exhibition Catalogue.

⁵⁹ Lightbown, "The Tavolette ", 295.

⁶⁰ Ms. A87 – G. Bichi, *Catalogo del Magistrato de' Quattro Provveditori della Generale Biccherna qui raccolti per ordine e disposizione dell'Ill. mo. Sig. Abb. Galgano Bichi, 1725*, and Ms. A88 – G. Bichi, *Catalogo de' riseduti nel Magistrato degl'Esecutori di Gabella qui raccolti per ordine e disposizione dell'Ill. mo. Sig. Abb. Galgano Bichi, anno 1725*.

di Tuccio ALESSI (not in the panel text), Leoncino di SQUARCIALEONE (not in the panel text, but DE'MACONI), Gualtieri di 'Mis' RINALDO (panel text reads RENALDO) and Cione di Mis Mino ROSSO. While allowances need to be made for slight irregularities in spelling, the alteration or addition of names is confusing and although Bichi's Register of Provveditore lists all four names that appear in the panel, he makes no reference to the Podestà.

Borgia's otherwise helpful alphabetical list of family heraldry shows the following: the name Alessi is not in his alphabetical list, nor does he mention the name Squarcialeone, but he lists Maconi with coat-of-arms of *gold ground, with black anchored cross and six silver crescents*. This concurs with the heraldry on the panel. The Rinaldini arms are listed as: *gold ground, with red patent cross decorated with red balls*. This concurs with the heraldry on the panel; Borgia does not list Rosso.⁶¹

Tomei's entry copies Borgia's entry and adds for Andreuccio di Tuccio heraldry of *small grey drop-shaped pattern all the way down into the point*. This concurs with the heraldry on the panel. For Cione di Mino Rosso he lists: *red, with a dark-grey patterned lion into the point*. This also concurs with the heraldry on the panel.⁶²

The alteration of the names begs the question why the correct family names were not, in most cases, included on this panel. Was the panel text changed, or overpainted? Does the heraldry refer to the names on the panel, as suggested by Borgia, or to the actual family name, as listed by Bichi in 1724?⁶³ More research might reveal if there was a commercial or political interest in changing either the panel, or

⁶¹ "D'oro, alla croce ancorata di nero, caricata di sei crescenti d'argento"; "D'oro, alla croce patente, ritrinciata e pomettata di rosso". Borgia, "Le Armi Gentilizie," in Borgia, *Le Biccherno*, 331-373.

⁶² "Di minuto vaio in punta"; "di rosso, al leone di minuto vaio in punta di undici file". Maria Ceppari, "Don Stefano," in Tomei, *Le Biccherno*, 136.

⁶³ Borgia, *Le Biccherno*, 78.

the archival records, or both, during conservation and archival re-organisation in the 18th and 19th centuries. The inscriptions have a direct connection with the relevant semester, the date in the inscription confirms this. The script was subject to strict conventions in design, in language (Latin or the Tuscan/Sienese vernacular) and was executed by carefully trained and chosen individual artists.⁶⁴

Having referred to the inconsistencies in the spelling of names, the confusion about the date in the archives also demands a closer look. We might safely assume that the first three months of that semester would still have been in 1319 and the following three would have been in 1320, as during the *trecento* the New Year started on 25 March. However, it would have been unusual to officially date the panel for the first three months. The Biccherna panel for 1320, as listed in all subsequent publications, acted as cover for the register of 1319/20. The date on the panels was always the date of the register it covered. In the case of this panel this does not appear to be so and the register itself is lost, or missing. There is no record of a Biccherna cover for the second semester of 1320, either.

A possible explanation of this administrative confusion could be the exclusion of notaries, after their 1318 uprising and the subsequent outlaw of their Guild, preventing training in these fields. This measure resulted in a severe shortage of notaries, causing chaos in the commune's legal and financial systems.⁶⁵ They were not reinstated until 1341.

However, the biggest question raised when researching this panel, concerns the position of the Podestà, the head of the police and the military, Conte Ughe da

⁶⁴ Maginnis, *The World*, 119-160, 275-286.

⁶⁵ Bowsky, *A Medieval...*, 64.

Battefolle. His coat-of-arms, appended as an image within the figurative part of the panel as a single, badly degraded heraldic device, appears in a non-dimensional plane, although visually tentatively supported by the canopies of the trees (Fig. 5). Although this would appear to be an unusual location for the heraldry of the Podestà, we see a new development in the placement of this image in this way, starting on the panel for 1314 (second semester)⁶⁶ and continuing in those of 1321 (first semester)⁶⁷ and 1324 (second semester).⁶⁸ The placement of the heraldry in these three figurative panels appears to perfectly balance the image of the Camarlengo working at his desk, but somehow in the narrative San Galgano panel under discussion, this does not appear to be the case.

Ugho da Battefolle is not mentioned in the Bichi registers. He appears to be absent in the Register of Capitani del Popolo, important in case these had temporarily taken over this position, as happened during this period.⁶⁹ However, these, around the date of the panel, are for different names.⁷⁰ There appear to be no entries for registered criminal acts, dealt with by the Capitani from 1306 to 1333, either. We find no entry for Battefolle in Di Crollolanza *Dizionario Storico-Blasonico delle Famiglie Nobili* ⁷¹, or Maria Ilari's *Famiglie, Località, Istituzioni di Siena e del suo Territorio* (2002).⁷² The latter does make a mention of the name only, but lists no supporting information,

⁶⁶ Tomei, *Le Biccherne...*, 133.

⁶⁷ Tomei, *Le Biccherne...*, 139.

⁶⁸ Tomei, *Le Biccherne...*, 141.

⁶⁹ Bowsky, *A Medieval*, 35-38.

⁷⁰ Siena State Archives, Register of the Consistoro: List of Capitani del Popolo, 1317-1324: 1319, May-October: Tommaso di Pietro Manenteschi from Trevi; 1319, Nov. to 1320, April: Andrea di Francesco della Casa, from Todi; 1320, May-Oct: Benedetto di Zaccaria, from Orvieto; 1320, Nov.- 1321, April: Ugolino di Guelfo Guelfucci from Città di Castello; 1321 May- October: Carlo di Brodario, from Sassoferrato.

⁷¹ G. Di Crollalanza, *Dizionario Storico-Blasonico delle Famiglie Nobili e Notabile Italiane Estinte e Fiorenti* (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni Editore, 1886). Boston Public Library. Accessed 18/03/17. <https://archive.org/details/dizionarioistoric03crol/page/n5>.

⁷² Maria Ilari, *Famiglie, Località, Istituzioni di Siena e del suo Territorio*, Libri di Storia (Siena: Betti Editrice, 2002).

other than a hint at a contract which should be perused by further research (*Una pergamene del Diplomatico archivio generale dei contratti, lo spoglio nel ms. B 92*).

Neither has an entry for the name Folle, in case this could have been a separate name.

In his own contributory article on Heraldry, Luigi Borgia lists Ugo di Battifolle but, strangely, under U for Ugo and not under B for Battifolle, whereas the majority of names, if not all, are listed under the first letter of their patronym. He lists the heraldry for this family as follows as *a blue ground, with lion rampant in a St Andrew cross of silver and red*.⁷³

Interestingly, twenty years later, Luigi Borgia in his contributory article on Biccherna Heraldry in Tomei et al, again mentions (and again as an afterthought), the name of Ugo **Guidi** Conte di Battifolle as Podestà for the year 1320.⁷⁴ For the first time the name Guidi is introduced. Surprisingly, this comment is made at the very end of his article, when he deals superficially with heraldry of a few random names, not from Siena, but of officials, who have allegedly carried out important functions in the Commune at some time during the mid-trecento. He lists neither heraldry, nor source. Interestingly, both references are mere footnotes in his text.

In view of the earlier observations in respect of names, the family name **Guidi** may have simply been overlooked, like all other family names on this panel. However, it is

⁷³ "D'azzurro, al leone inquartato in croce di S. Andrea d'argento e di rosso". This would appear to support the contention that the heraldry above the Saint is, indeed, that of a person by that name. However, there are no records that confirm this name in important positions anywhere else around that time, which was regular process. This time, Borgia lists his source as: P. Litta, *Famiglie Celebre Italiane: Guidi di Romagna*, Milano s.e., 1866, Tavola XIV. Sadly, there is no Bibliography with his catalogue, so this reference needs to be verified. Borgia, "Le Armi Gentilizie", in *Le Biccherna*, 321-373, 370 ns 2 and 3.

⁷⁴ Borgia, "L'Araldica nelle Biccherna", in Tomei, *Le Biccherna*, 2003, 52 n.79.

unusual for there not to have been any documentary evidence in the archives for the name of a Podestà, or in other positions of importance, in any other commune.⁷⁵

The placement of the Podestà's coat-of-arms inside the figurative section of this panel need not mean anything other than a new convention, as a result of an increase in prestige of this official. It is interesting to note that the apparent need to display the arms of the Podestà in the figurative element of Biccherna covers appears to coincide with a sudden rise in their stipend. Awarded by the Electors, it had been held within the range of £3,000-£3,700 (gold florins) per semester, for almost three decades, after a start at around £4,250 in 1287. It then rose significantly, by semestral increases, until into the early 1320s, to around £6,000 when they stabilised again at around £4,500. Although no particular reason is given for this, Bowsky argues that the end of threats by the Duke of Calabria, by Castruccio Castracani degli Antelminelli of Lucca, or by the Emperor Louis the Bavarian and the Aldobrandeschi, might have been an explanation. Other times brought other threats that were equally dealt with by Podestà, whose actual increases in salary continued right up to the Black Death of 1348 and beyond.⁷⁶ However, one cannot help but wonder about the authenticity of the name of the alleged Podestà on this panel and could, therefore, argue another possibility.

Looking deeper into methods of miniature painting in the period under discussion, it is clear that, often, a letter A, or D, or any other with a straight 'leg', is connected to the following letter with a similar feature.⁷⁷ On this detail of the inscription on the panel, we can clearly see that the name appears to be D'Abate Folle (Fig. 6). Di Crollalanza lists this name as follows: "The ABATE of Florence belonged to the White

⁷⁵ Bowsky, *A Medieval...*, 26, 29.

⁷⁶ Bowsky, *A Medieval...*, 30.

⁷⁷ Christopher De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Phaidon Press, 1986).

party and were powerful there until they were forced to flee the city when defeated by the Blacks. They held the dominion of the Castle of Galianza, and as Captains of the People acted as arbitrators in government. Dante, in his *Inferno* (Canto XXXII, Circle IX) famously meets a Bocca Degli Abate, who was guilty of treason by causing Florence's defeat against the Sienese during the Battle of Montaperte (1260). – The family then disappeared from Florence in the mid-15th century".⁷⁸ Dante, a Florentine exile, addresses him as "thou filthy traitor", referring to his treachery when, as a Ghibelline, he fought on the Guelph side and, critically, cut off the hand of the standard-bearer of the Florentine cavalry, which caused their defeat.⁷⁹ It would appear that Bocca, through his actions and subsequent exile from Florence, discredited the family name. The office of Podestà was always carried out by a 'foreigner', a citizen from another commune and exiles were forbidden by statute to act as Podestà.⁸⁰ Bowsky has asserted in a different context that Siena has never had a Podestà from Florence, in other words – there are no records of a Podestà by the name of Abate, or from Florence, in the Archives of Siena.⁸¹ How would the artist have been instructed with regard to this person, if he officially did not exist? Or did the scribe merely make a spelling mistake?

Eventually, in 2016, Andrea Barlucchi solves part of the mystery by providing evidence of members of the Guidi family as magistrates in Emilia Romagna and Tuscany and, particularly, of their branch of the Battifolle as Podestà and Captains of

⁷⁸ Di Crollalanza, *Dizionario Storico-Blasonico*: "ABATE di Firenze seguì il partito dei Bianchi e fu potente in Firenze che dovette poi abbandonare quando quella fazione fu sconfitta dai Neri. Dante à reso famoso un Bocca degli Abati nel XXXII Canto dell'*Inferno*, al cui tradimento fu dovuta la sconfitta di Monteperto. Questa famiglia scomparisce da Firenze dopo la metà del XV secolo. Gli Abati di Firenze tennero il dominio del castello di Galianza, e come capi del popolo sovente disposero a loro arbitrio del governo".

⁷⁹ Dante Alighieri, *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri The Florentine*, "Inferno", Cantica I, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers (Harmondsworth, UK and Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1949), L. 106, 274; Dante, *The Comedy...*, "Inferno", Commentaries, I, 81, 276.

⁸⁰ Bowsky, *A Medieval...*, 26.

⁸¹ Bowsky, *A Medieval...*, 28, 29.

War in Siena, as early as 1285. Unfortunately, while he lists an Ugo di Battifolle as Podestà in 1321, second semester, he also lists Simone di Battifolle as Podestà in the same year and same semester. The confusion, therefore, persists and further research will no doubt shed light on this, as well as on that around the Abate family.⁸²

The next entry in Bichi's Register of Provisioners is for the year 1320. It just lists one name, that of a Niccolo di Jacomino BENZI. The panel is missing. In 1323 Don Stefano di San Galgano again acts as Camarlengo, for the semester July-December. The panel is missing. The panel of 1326, the next case study, also dedicated to San Galgano, again depicts one of the Abbey's kneeling monks as Camarlengo. No information on this panel exists, as shall be shown.

Dealing now with the iconography in the figurative image, we see that, for the first time, there is a significant notion of a narrative. It depicts the Camarlengo's presence within a legendary event. As described when dealing with the saint's legend earlier in this thesis, this image depicts the moment Galgano intends to continue on his journey, after having used his sword as a cross in order to pray. However, he finds it impossible to remove and, in spite of the horse's clear impatience to carry on, he suddenly becomes aware that this is the moment alluded to by the archangel Michael in his dream, when he was instructed to leave his worldly life of debauchery behind and dedicate himself to God. This is, therefore, the moment of his conversion.⁸³ The trecento Sienese public would have been familiar with the sword as a mysterious symbolic motif, analogous with the cross, considered to be itself fixed, in a constantly changing world. By being unable to remove the sword, Galgano realised the

⁸² Andrea Barlucchi, "Formazione e Gavetta di un Notaio Casentino: Ser Pietro di Ser Grifo da Pratovecchio, Cittadino Senese", in *Il Notariato in Casentino Medioevo, Cultura, prassi, carriere*, ed. Andrea Barlucchi (Firenze: Associazione di studi storici Elio Conti, 2016), 95-124, 106 n.29. www.academia.edu, 05/10/2017.

⁸³ Tomei, *Le Biccherno...*, 134.

importance of his new mission. The image includes the iconography of the two trees, bracketing the scene. These are present in almost all the saint's artistic representations and, either with or without the horse, have become part of his established motif. One could argue that the image is anachronistic, as it displays the moment of his conversion, but depicts him with a halo and no longer wearing his armour, implying that his canonisation has taken place. That and the presence of the Camarlengo, Don Stefano, causes the narrative to have become an overlay of several scenes. Although the monk's pose could arguably have depicted him as the patron of the commission, the original title of the scene emphasizes that he is kneeling in devotion to his saint and we must, therefore, not place any significant assumptions on the panel's commission. As Cornice has shown, San Galgano depicted in this way was an image present all over Siena during the first half of the trecento. This first example of a narrative figurative scene on a Biccherna cover may, therefore, be seen as a reflection of the Treasury Magistracy's intention to use this space for the display of important personalities, or events, evident in Siena at that time. We will see that the relatively small space provided for this scene would be significantly increased in subsequent narratives on Treasury covers. However, its size did not detract from its importance and was compensated for in a precious gold background.

The second case study, *The Punishment of the Envious*, alternatively entitled *The Story of Aggression displayed toward San Galgano*, dated 1326, contained the Gabella register for January to June. In his mostly formal analysis of this panel, Miklós Boskovits has argued for another attribution to Guido Cinatti.⁸⁴ The cover measures 40 x 25cm and is held in private collection (Fig. 7).

⁸⁴ Boskovits, "Una tavoletta"..., 415.

This Gabella panel only recently emerged on the antiquarian market (exact date unknown)⁸⁵, at an auction of the collection of Count Marie-Joseph-Charles de l'Escalopier (1812-1861), honorary conservator at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris, and vice-president of the Société des Antiquaires de France. It is now in private possession at an unknown location. Very little information is available, as there are no references to its existence in either the Sienese State Archives, or in Galgano Bichi's 1724 registers, as the panel was then unknown. In an effort to deal with a secure attribution, Boskovits mainly deals with Form and Style, especially physiognomy. The catalogues raisonnées curated by Carli (1950), Borgia (1984) and Tomei (2003), are all dated too early for inclusion of this panel in their anthologies. However, to assist in the study of the iconographical aspects of this panel, we again turn to the Legend of San Galgano. Its narrative of *The Punishment of the Envious* is much debated and questions in respect of its accuracy are unresolved. The study of the names of the Executors on this panel yields more significant information. Whether and how this panel was displayed and the extent to which the public had access to it, is unclear and, therefore, dealing with its social art historical significance may sometimes have to appear speculative.

In the absence of treatment of this panel in the catalogues raisonnés, we stay close to Maria Assunta Ceppari's version:

Singnori seguitori de la gienerale Chabella del chomune di Siena Toffo di Picho, Mino di Vincenti, Chonte di missere Arengghieri de'rosi, da chalende gienaio anni mcccxxv infino a chalende luglio anni mcccxxvi, chamarlengo nel detto tempo dono Nicholaio monaco di Sancto Ghalghano.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Boskovits assumes a date "*verso la metà del XIX secolo*", judging by a sticker in the bottom right-hand corner of the panel. Boskovits, "Una tavoletta", 416; Maria Assunta Ceppari, "San Galgano e la spada spezzata: Una Biccherna trecentesca poco nota", in *Accademia dei Rozzi – Ventennale della Rivista Accademia in Siena*, 27 September 2013. Convention Catalogue (Siena: Accademia dei Rozzi, 2013), 16-21, 18.

⁸⁶ Maria Assunta Ceppari, "San Galgano e la spada...", 18.

She notes that the text appears to close with a motif of a “*curious stork-like bird, chasing an insect*” (Fig. 8). This text is herewith translated as follows:

THE LORDS EXECUTIVE . OF THE . GENERAL . GABELLA . OF THE COMMUNE. OF SIENA .
TOFFO DI PICO . MINO DIVINCENTI . COUNT . DI MISSERE . ARENGHIERI . DEROSI .
DATED . JANUARY . OF THE YEAR . M . CCC . XXV . UNTIL . JULY . OF THE YEAR . M . CCC
. XX . VI, CAMERLENGO . AT THIS TIME . DON NICHOLAS . MONK . OF SAN GALGANO .

On cross-referencing the names with those on other panels, we find in Galgano Bichi’s registers that a Tofo di Piecho, or Pierho, is also recorded as one of the four Provisioners on a Biccherna cover three years earlier in 1323, second semester, when, as was the case in the previous panel (1320), Don Stefano was the Camarlengo. As there is no reference to the 1326 panel in the Archives, nor to the register it contained, it is not possible to verify its names and arms, unless other references are found. In this context, it is interesting to see that Ceppari, while dealing with the name Tofo di Pino, confirms this and notes an ‘*18th century register of Gabella executors*’ (Bichi’s register?) has been left blank. However, she has been successful in locating the Camarlengo, the Cistercian monk Don Niccoló, in another manuscript listing taxation payments for 1322-1344, where his name is mentioned twice. She also found records of the names of the officials at the Gabella in 1326, compiled from manuscripts that have since been lost.⁸⁷

Interestingly, the name Tofo di Pico (or di Pierho), as well as those of his sons Cione and Meuccio, also appear on a guest list of a feast held in Siena in December 1326, on

⁸⁷ Ceppari, “San Galgano e la spada spezzata”, 20.

the occasion of the investiture of Francesco Bandinelli in the Order of the Knights.⁸⁸

Additionally, Bowsky, when dealing with the task of finding names and occupations for members of the Nine, finds a strong banking and mercantile connection with Tofo's name, by consulting a list of members of the Merchant Guild. Emphasizing their important role in government, they are often found involved in various new loan instruments. It is there that he, too, finds a reference to a Tofo del fu Pico, who has been lent £100 (auri) for four months by Niccolò del fù Benzi, a member of the Nine.⁸⁹

When dealing with the heraldry, Ceppari confirms the first shield to belong to Tofo. Curiously, she states that the Vincente shield, which on this panel appears as *gold, with a blue four-stepped ladder*, appears in several seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth century manuscripts as *blue, with a gold four-stepped ladder*.⁹⁰ According to Ceppari, confirmed by notes found in the archives, a Mino di Vincenti was a member of the Supreme Government in 1329 and of the Nove in December of that year. She has further been able to confirm the coat-of-arms for the Conte di Aringhieri de' Rossi family, correctly identified as: *two partitions, the first one blue with gold lilies, the second gold with twinned red bars*. The Conte di Aringhieri acted as Provisioner of the Biccherna as early as 1298, under the name of Don Botantano Arengheri. The Rossi/Rosso were a significant merchant family, with mixed business interests and among the wealthiest on the Sienese hierarchical scale. They shall be dealt with more closely in the next Chapter (*The Nativity*, 1334).⁹¹

⁸⁸ C. Mazzi, "Descrizione della festa in Siena per la cavalleria di Francesco Bandinelli nel 1326", *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, XVIII, Fasc. I (1911), 336-363; Also cited by Ceppari, "San Galgano e la spada spezzata", 21.

⁸⁹ Bowsky, "The Buon Governo ...", 368-381, 374, n. 26.

⁹⁰ Ceppari, *San Galgano*, 20, n. 8.

⁹¹ "Nel primo d'azzurro seminato di gigli d'oro; nel secondo d'oro, alla gemella di rosso"; Bowsky, "The Buon Governo...", 380.

We see, therefore, more detailed references to Tofo di Pico and may conclude that he was an important member of society, active in Sienese communal life and appeared regularly in contemporary records. Therefore, it would appear that close iconographical perusal of at least one of the Executors' names has yielded some in-depth information about his life and activities while, curiously, this panel itself is not documented in any primary sources. No particular reference has so far been found which connects names to the commission, or to specific Galganian interest.

This brings us to the iconography of the figurative image on this panel, namely the moment in the legend that the region around Montesiepi was plundered by jealous attackers and the cross broken, while the saint himself was on a pilgrimage to Rome. The legend then records their efforts to extract the sword (a symbol of the cross) from the earth, but it breaks in two and God's wrath, being instant, brings immediate punishment. Boskovits, who in his work refers to the legend as recorded by Eugenio Susi, relates how this devastation appears to have actually happened and was recorded in 1185, by three papal representatives, whose identities have not been confirmed, while recording the Saint's life in preparation for his canonisation.⁹² However, this source does not mention the location, or the nature of the suffering imposed, while another source, according to Boskovits, but not referenced and assumed to be older, records the existence at the beginning of the fourteenth century of a Cistercian Abbey in the vicinity of Montesiepi. Yet another source proposes the identities of the aggressors to have been the abbot and a convert of the Abbey of Santa Maria di Serena, together with a priest from around Chiusdino.⁹³ Today, we

⁹² Eugenio Susi, "La Memoria Contesa: il dossier agiografico di San Galgano," in *La Spada nella Roccia. San Galgano e l'epopea eremitica di Montesiepi*, ed. di A. Benvenuti, (2004): 40-41; quoted in Miklós Boskovits, "Una tavoletta...", 422, n.6.

⁹³ Boskovits, "Una Tavoletta...", refers to 'fonti più antiche' 415.

know that a Benedictine community, toward the end of the twelfth century, by then in grave decline, was taken up into its congregation of Volterra. Boskovits, therefore, argues the possibility that the monks of Serena and the Cistercians may have created competing conflict situations and that it is these that are reflected in the panel of 1326, showing 'brown habits' of the Vallombrosani, thus suggesting an oral tradition among the monks of San Galgano (one of whom is the Camarlengo of this panel), who blamed the monks of Serena for the devastation.⁹⁴

Maria Ceppari, who used Franco Cardini's version of the legend, has reproduced the part of the text which describes the attack by '*alquanti pieni d'invidia*' (several full of envy) in the Legend, as follows: "There came several full of envy to the spot where his sword had been fixed and, clad in livid colours, started with so much fervour as if God himself wished it, to dislocate it from the earth to carry it away with them, but were unable to do so and left it behind, broken and partly stuck in the ground. And having left to go home, by divine judgement they were all thus punished: some managed to flee, while one fell into a stream and drowned, another was struck and killed by lightning. Then came a wolf and attacked the other and got him by the arm; he prayed to beato Galgano, and unhurt the wolf fled and did not die."⁹⁵ (Fig. 9).

As all scholarly references have assumed that these were religious monks, the attempt at identification of the attackers by their habits, in order to identify their order, is a recurring one. Alessandra Gianni, in her contributory article in *Speciosa*

⁹⁴ Boskovits, "Una Tavoletta...", 416.

⁹⁵ Franco Cardini, ed. *Leggenda di santo Galgano confessore* [sec. XIV], (Roma: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Chigi 2757, M.V. 118, c. 180r, San Galgano) 123-138, quoted by Maria Ceppari, "San Galgano...", 18: "Si vennero alquanti pieni d'invidia al luogo dove la sua spada era fitta, et inecon marroni e altri ferri si si engegnavano sconfiggerla di terra, e con molta fadiga, come a Dio piacque, non potendola sconfiggere, si la ruppero, et volendola portare co l'oro, e non potendolo, si la lassaro così rotta in terra e andavansene. Et andandosene per tornare alle lor case, per divino giudicio ne fuoro così puniti. E partiti che fuorono, e l'uno cadde in uno fiumicello d'acqua e annegò, e all'altro venne una saetta da cielo e ucielo, poi venne uno lupo e aventossi addosso all'altro e preselo per lo braccio; e raccomandandosi al biato Galgano, incontanente el lupo uggì, e non morì."

Imago, only refers to the attackers as ‘*three jealous individuals*’.⁹⁶ The only other scholar, who has given this serious attention is again Maria Ceppari, in her article in 2013, when she refers to ‘*some jealous individuals*’.⁹⁷ She further refers to ‘*two persons in monastic habits and a third*’ and, therefore, concludes that these are religious individuals, in spite of the generic references in the ancient hagiographies, which have only referred to *jealous* or *farisei*.⁹⁸

Another iconographical matter raised by all three writers is the function of the saint in this image. Boskovits first refers to the legend and asserts that the saint and the monk witness the immediate punishment by God of the envious.⁹⁹ Gianni simply gives a formal analysis of the Saint, as has been done many times before when illustrating a move toward a more civic function of Galganian iconography during this period, for example the appearance on the front covers of Treasury books.¹⁰⁰ Ceppari claims San Galgano, in his red cloak, is represented in the act of prayer to the broken cross, accompanied behind him by the monk Don Niccoló from the Cistercian Abbey, who was the Camarlengo for this semester.¹⁰¹ This last observation would appear to be unlikely, as the broken sword is clearly to the left and behind the Saint, who is looking ahead toward the *invidiosi*. The fact that he is displayed observing the punishment, which was instant according to the legend and given that he was himself not present when the attack took place, could arguably mean that an iconographical analysis of

⁹⁶ “tre invidiosi” Alessandra Gianni, “La fortuna di san Galgano: l’iconografia e il culto dal XII al XIX secolo,” in *Speciosa Imago*, 114.

⁹⁷ Ceppari, “San Galgano...,” 18.

⁹⁸ Ceppari, “San Galgano...,” 18.

⁹⁹ Boskovits, “Una Tavoleta...,” 415.

¹⁰⁰ Gianni, 114.

¹⁰¹ Ceppari, “San Galgano...,” 18.

this figurative representation reveals a symbolic act, by his gesture of Grace, but also Admonishment, as shall be shown.

While there is no question of referring to Dante as a direct source for this panel, it could be argued that the iconography of the figurative section reflects the poet's rendition of the *Purgation of Envy*, one of the most serious of all vices and dealt with in his *Purgatorio*, *Canto XIII*, *The Second Terrace; examples of kindness; the purgation of envy; Sapia*.¹⁰² If, for a moment, we stop trying to identify the attackers by their 'religious habits', but deal with their outfits in the 'livid colour of the stone', the colour of Envy (*livore*), as described by Dante, an interesting parallel might emerge.¹⁰³ People consumed with envy were believed to spread that colour around their environment, such as the rocks in the scene and their cloaks, made of rough horsehair in that same colour, forever prickly and itching. In Dante's description, the *invidiosi* were blinded as falcon before the flight, with their eyes pinned down, in order to stop them from seeing and be envious of others.¹⁰⁴ Only one envious is shown with eyes closed. San Galgano's gesture of pure Grace, which is an act of sheer Charity and the opposite and only treatment for Envy, is made very clear. It could be argued, therefore, that this is a symbolical identification of the purgation of the vice Envy, redeemed by its opposing virtue of Charity, or Redemption.¹⁰⁵ Envy of other city states is a theme that recurs in the relations between the Sienese and their neighbours, especially Florence, Pisa and Genua during the 14th century. It is this rivalry that made them repeatedly embark on impossibly ambitious projects, such as the reconstruction of the Duomo, the building

¹⁰² John D. Sinclair, ed. and trans., *Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy, II: Purgatorio*. (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1939) 168-180. The notes to this canto could be interpreted as particularly relevant to the 1326 panel, 179-180.

¹⁰³ Sinclair, *Purgatorio*..., 179.

¹⁰⁴ Mark Musa, ed. and trans. *Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy, 4, Purgatory, Canto XIII*, Verse translation and Commentary (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000), 134-142.

¹⁰⁵ Sinclair, *Dante Alighieri*, 179-180.

of other large architectural projects and the draining and preparation of the land for Talamone, a small and malarious port, as well as the invention of their own river, the Diana, the mythical underground stream.¹⁰⁶

As in the first case study, the Camarlengo's office was carried out by a monk of the Cistercian Abbey of San Galgano and both are depicted kneeling, while watching an important scene in the legend. The public's eyes would have followed their gaze and the story of the Invidiosi and their punishment would have been explained to them. The people revered the local saint, whose legend, abbey church and monastery had become so important and influential in the development of the city. Our basic understanding of this narrative could, therefore, be a confirmation of the monk's influence on the commission. Don Niccolò, in an attempt to make the Sienese people aware of their over-ambitious efforts, used Galgano's reputation as an example of a bad knight who became a saint. This dissertation has, therefore, shown that the shift in the Camarlengo's iconography and the emphasis on his veneration of the saint, combined with the increasing importance to the city of Cistercian monks in general works and administrative activities, almost certainly mean that the Camarlengo had a firm role in the commission on both occasions, in the absence so far of conclusive evidence that any member of the Provveditore, or the Podestà, might have carried out that task.

¹⁰⁶ Sinclair, *Dante Alighieri*, 177, 180.

Chapter Two – Religion in a civic location.

The three panels in this Chapter all represent the new trecento change in the narrative figurative scene. They display Marian images that reflect the strong Sienese trecento emphasis on the veneration of the Virgin Mary and refer to other major works, on display elsewhere in the city, in Italy or France. The first, a *Nativity* dated 1334, is the first Treasury cover that we know of, which displays this well-known religious narrative iconography. The second case study, *The Common Good (Ben Comun)*, dated 1344, represents in the strongest terms the allegorical ideology of a state run by Justice, for the prosperity and peace of the Sienese people. The third, a *Presentation or Circumcision*, dated 1357, clearly was a reproduction of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Presentation in the Temple*, a panel in the *Crescentius Altarpiece*, 1342, now in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence.

The commune took pride in presenting the Virgin as their Protectress and in her abundant civic artistic iconography elsewhere she was depicted as the crowned Queen of Siena. Therefore, her presence on civic Treasury panels speaks for itself. Yet, all three are examples of how the commune, in its commissioning process, might have endeavoured to emphasize the efforts of the ruling government, namely the guardianship and protection of the Virgin Mary. The panels also show how our research into families and names becomes significantly easier once the missing surnames have been found. As mentioned before, although the names of the *magnate* were generally well-known, they were mostly omitted from official documents.

However, it is this social group from which the officials of the various magistracies were mostly selected.¹⁰⁷

The Gabella panel of the *Nativity*, dated the second semester, July to January 1334, is executed by an unknown artist, in tempera on wood and measures 41 x 26.3 cm (Fig. 10). Its alleged execution in the Byzantine style had locally only been seen on the front predella of Duccio's *Maestà* (1308-1311), for the high altar in the Duomo and now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo.¹⁰⁸ It is held at the museum of the Sienese State Archives (Fig. 11).

As before, we again look at the names of the signatories first. The inscription reads:

CAMARLENGO E ASEGUITORI DE LA GENERALE KABELLA DEL COMUNE DI SENA DA
KALENDE LUGLIO MCCCXXXIII . INFINO A KALENDE GIENNAIO ANNO DETTO . DONO
GIGLIO DI S[AN]C[T]O GALGANO, BIAGIO CHIAVELLI, CECCO DI SERE BINDO,
BINDOCCIO DI LATINO"

which translated reads:

CAMARLENGO AND EXECUTORS . OF THE GENERAL . GABELLA . OF THE COMMUNE .
OF SIENA . DATED JULY 1334 . TO JANUARY . OF THE SAME YEAR . DON GIGLIO . OF
SAN GALGANO. BIAGIO CHIAVELLI . CECCHO DI SER BINDO. BINDOCCIO DI LATINO.

For Biagio Chiavelli, Borgia lists the heraldry as *gold and blue banding*. Alessandro Tomei takes this over, with the exception of the arms for Chiavelli, which are described as *gold and silver, instead of gold and blue*.¹⁰⁹ On the image these appear as gold and black, the black could possibly be tarnished silver or blue. Maria Ilari lists this name as Chiavelli, of the Nove, while Bowsky is more specific and informs us that Biagio

¹⁰⁷ Bowsky, "Buon Governo", 372.

¹⁰⁸ Borgia, *Le Biccherne...*, 88; Tomei, *Le Biccherne...*, 144.

¹⁰⁹ "Bandato d'oro e azzuro", Borgia, *Le Biccherne...*, 88; Tomei, *Le Biccherne...*, 144.

Chiavelli was a merchant who served on the Nove in January and February 1339.¹¹⁰ The second Executor's name on this panel is that of Cecco di Sere Bindo, with the following shield: *Embattled partitioning of gold and blue*.¹¹¹ The enjoyment of the distinctive addition of *Ser(e)* in front of names was extended to physicians, priests and a few others, such as the Mantellates.¹¹² Although Borgia transcribes the text in the panel exactly as it appears, in his reference to its heraldry he adds the name BONICHI, not recorded on the panel itself.¹¹³ He identifies the coat-of-arms as correct. We may, therefore, assume that Borgia had archival knowledge of this name, or used a previous source, although which is unclear. Bichi reports '*Ceccho di f[r]ate Bindo*'. This reference to Bonichi brings this panel among the few where more important iconographical information may be gleaned, as quite a lot appears to be known about the Bonichi family. Bowsky informs us that Bindo Bonichi was a poet with an illustrious career.¹¹⁴ Also, that he was rector of a confraternity in 1319, hence the addition of 'frate' (and Ser on the panel), as indicated in Bichi's 1724 description. Bowsky deals extensively with the Bonichi and identifies several members of the family as judges, members of the Nove and other city magistracies, as well as proponents of the liberal arts.¹¹⁵ Bindo Bonichi was born 'around Montaperti' and died by 1338. He was a member of the ruling oligarchy, served on the Nove at least twice (1309 and 1318) and was a consul of the Merchant Guild, the Mercanzia, at least three times (1307, 1311 and 1317). By

¹¹⁰ Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 343.

¹¹¹ "Partito merlato d'oro e d'azzurro".

¹¹² A late medieval Italian Servite Order for tertiary lay widows and single women. Bowsky, *Medieval...*, 20, n. 50.

¹¹³ Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 88.

¹¹⁴ Luciano Banchi, ed. "Rime di Bindo Bonichi da Siena, Scelta di curiosità letterarie inedite o rare, LXXXII" (Bologna: 1867) 187; quoted in Bowsky, *Medieval...*, 271, n. 55.

¹¹⁵ Bowsky, *The Medieval...*, 69, 172, 270, 271, 281, 283.

1327, he was an oblate brother of Santa Maria della Misericordia.¹¹⁶ His poetry offers us insights into the values, culture and civic ideals of the ruling oligarchy. However, the name Cecco, or Ceccho, or Ciecho (all regular Sienese first names) is not found linked to that of Bonichi. It could, therefore, be that of a son, grandson or nephew of the poet and rector. There is a strong likelihood that Cecco was a nickname for Francesco. Bowsky dedicates several pages to the poet and quotes his work extensively. Bindo Bonichi (ca. 1260-1338) and Cecco [Francesco] Angiolieri (ca. 1260-1313)¹¹⁷, two of the most important Sienese poets and literary intellectuals, were seen as Siena's answer to Dante and Boccaccio, the famous poets of her rival Florence.¹¹⁸ Both were highly politically engaged, with Angiolieri the more controversial. Whether Bonichi might have known him personally and named a son after him becomes an interesting thought, which is purely speculative. More recent sources shed even more light on the matter, such as Monika Butzek, who deals with "*the master of grammar Ceccho, who translated the legend of San Savino into the vernacular, for insertion into the panel*", for which he received one lira from the Opera del Duomo in December 1335.¹¹⁹ This type of funding for translation into the vernacular by the commune allowed the *vite* of the Sienese patron saints to be exposed more widely among the general public, in that way making them more accessible at newly designed altars, thereby increasing their visibility and relevance to the laity. Whether Cecco translated more of these texts for inclusion in the other altarpieces commissioned for the works in the duomo around

¹¹⁶ Bowsky, *The Medieval...*, 281.

¹¹⁷ Mario Marti, "Cecco Angiolieri, Italian 14th century poet", in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, III, 1961. Accessed 16/05/2018: https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cecco-angiolieri_Dizionario-Biografico/.

¹¹⁸ Bowsky, *The Medieval...*, 220, 221.

¹¹⁹ 'il maestro di gramatica Ceccho, che trasse la storia di San Savino in volgare, per farla nella tavole' Monika Butzek, "Le Pali di Sant'Ansano e degli altri Protettori della città nel Duomo di Siena. Una storia Documentaria", in *Costruire una Cattedrale, l'Opera di Santa Maria di Siena tra XII e XIV Secolo*, eds. Andrea Giorgi and Stefano Moscadelli, (München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2005), 36, 58 n.14. Italian translation of P.A. Riedl and M. Seidel, eds. *Die Kirchen von Siena* (Munich: 1985).

the same time, has so far not been ascertained. Although no documentary evidence of a connection between Bindo Bonichi and Ceccho has so far been found, there can be no doubt that, as a linguist and literary intellectual, he would most certainly have been considered suitable to serve on the city's magistracies.

The last Executor mentioned in the text is Bindoccio di Latino: Borgia lists the heraldry as *Divided into blue and gold fields, the first with golden lilies, the second gold with red banding*.¹²⁰ He does not mention 'di Latino', but appears to have knowledge of the Rossi name in this connection and lists this person as Bindoccio Rossi. Bowsky notes that a Bindoccio di Latino is also recorded as a rector of a confraternity in Siena in 1319 and suggests that this might be a Rossi.¹²¹ Bichi lists this Executor as Bindoccio di Latino de 'Rossi'.¹²²

Dealing with the figurative narrative in the iconography of this panel, we first turn to the Camarlengo and see again a Cistercian monk from the Abbey of San Galgano, Don Giglio, positioned to the right and kneeling at the Virgin's feet. As an intellectual and exerting his influence on the commission, he may have suggested the choice of a Byzantine style. During this period, there were more depictions of the Virgin portrayed in this way. No information with regard to Don Giglio has so far been found and the Camarlengo's inclusion is the last time before monks as Camarlengi were omitted from the scenes altogether.

During the course of roughly thirty years and coinciding with the Pope's residency in Avignon (1309-1376), we see several works produced in Tuscany, Rome and Provence

¹²⁰ *Partito: nel primo d'azzurro, seminato di gigli d'oro; nel secondo d'oro, alla gemella di rosso Borgia, Le Bicchierne*, 362.

¹²¹ Bowsky, *The Medieval...*, 266, n.25.

¹²² Bichi, *Catalogo...* Arch. Bicchierne B 161. Fo.8 2a.r.

that represent the Virgin on what would appear to be a rock, with the Christ Child tightly wrapped in swadling cloth, in a crib behind her. As already noted, one of those is Duccio's *Nativity* on the front predella of the *Maestà* (1308). The panel has also sometimes been compared to that on a small painting previously held at the Musée Granet in Aix-en-Provence and now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, for its analogous style (Fig. 12).¹²³ This small painting, part of a 4-paneled polyptych, attributed to an Avignonese follower of Simone Martini, is informed by the visual culture of Byzantine mosaics of the seventh and eighth centuries (Fig. 13) and may have formed an example of a newly established iconographical depiction of the Virgin embedded in a rock, a motif depicted in this way in several examples in Rome and countries around the Mediterranean, during this period (Figs. 14 and 15).¹²⁴ According to Fauris de Saint Vincens, the scholar who owned three panels in the polyptych (the fourth panel is lost) in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (until 1819), the two panels in Aix once bore the arms of Anjou and Aragon on the back.¹²⁵ John Pope-Hennessy has suggested it was commissioned by King Robert of Anjou in Naples for the Convent of the Poor Clares at Aix, just before his death in 1343.¹²⁶ Another Angevin connotation is further suggested by and referred to in the Angevin lilies that appear in the arms, as well as on top of the angels' staffs in the figurative section of the panel.

¹²³ Borgia, *Le Biccherne...*, 88; Tomei, *Le Biccherne...*, 144.

¹²⁴ Borgia, *Le Biccherne...*, 88; Tomei, *Le Biccherne...*, 144.

¹²⁵ Michel Laclotte and Dominique Thiébault, *L'École d'Avignon*, (Paris: 1983), 193; Timothy Newbery, *Frames in the Robert Lehman Collection*, XIII (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art in association with Princeton University Press, 2007) Exhibition Catalogue, 253-254.

¹²⁶ John Pope-Hennessy, *The Robert Lehman Collection, I, Italian Paintings* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), 90, 91.

Shepherds, one of whom is always displayed as being informed of Christ's birth by an angel, are positioned in one of the corners (usually to her left) and Joseph seated by her side in his usual, morose pose. This specific iconographical composition of three separate scenes finds its source in Byzantine scriptural topographies of the Virgin in the Rock.¹²⁷ Not mentioned in the four canonical gospels, these elements were central to Eastern Christianity and refer to Isaiah's prophecy '*he shall dwell in the lofty cave of a strong rock*' and were part of an ancient tradition.¹²⁸ The composition, in Siena first used by Duccio, is copied in all later examples shown. Therefore, we see again that the magistrates of the Gabella chose and copied this popular theme for one of their Treasury covers.

The Virgin Mary's perceived role and reputation as Queen and Protectress of the Commune of Siena goes back to the mid-thirteenth century and the occasion of the presentation to the Virgin of the keys to the city, after what was believed to have been her intercession at the battle of Montaperti, won by the Ghibelline Sienese over the Florentines in 1260. The ceremony took place in the Duomo, in front of the depiction of the *Madonna del Voto*, then on the altar and depicted in one of the most explicitly narrative images on a Gabella cover, dated 1483 (Fig. 16). Hans Belting has referred to earlier, Byzantine images in Constantinople of the Virgin in that role, when emphasis was placed on her as Protectress of Emperors in war and of that city in battle.¹²⁹ John Beckwith equally pointed to early references to imperial protection by the Virgin.¹³⁰ It is in that same capacity that, in Siena, the Virgin came to be seen. Her name and

¹²⁷ Veronica Della Dora, *Landscape, Nature and the Sacred in Byzantium* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 180.

¹²⁸ The Bible, Old Testament, Isaiah 33:16.

¹²⁹ Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence (Bild und Kult) A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 36, 62.

¹³⁰ John Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (UK, USA, Canada and New Zealand: Penguin Books, 1970), 90.

assistance were invoked during times of misfortune, such as war, earthquakes, pestilence and hunger. During the trecento, when her cult in Siena reached its peak, she was increasingly depicted as Queen of Heaven, as well as Queen of Siena, in her civic role.

The veneration of the Virgin Mary and its subsequent Marian imagery permeated all levels of society. As supreme patron of the city state, she ruled most institutions, be they guilds, confraternities, the governing magistracies, hospitals and, of course, the Church. The implied roots of the special relationship between Siena and the Virgin can be traced securely to the twelfth century.¹³¹ Her image was transferred to coins and seals as early as 1280, such as that of the *Virgin and Child*, with on either side an angel holding a tall candle. The same seal is depicted in the lower frame edge around Simone Martini's *Maestà* fresco (1315) in the Sala del Mappamondo in the Palazzo Pubblico, the seat of government. This seal, without the inscription around its edge, but with the four initials that stand for Civitas Senarum Civitas Virginis (Ancient Siena, City of the Virgin), is depicted in the Ruler's shield on a Gabella cover of 1344, the next case study in this dissertation. These multiple depictions on seals of the Virgin Mary turn them into icons, an allusion to power and a significant reiteration of her importance as Protectress, secularizing her position and working closely with the Ruler's Justice.

The city's main Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, was dedicated to the Virgin Mary in the early thirteenth century, after its earlier dedication for the previous church on that same site. Its main altar has supported several altarpieces with her image, from the *Madonna degli Occhi Grossi* (ca. 1225), now in the Museo Metropolitana dell'Opera del Duomo, the *Madonna del Voto* (ca. 1267), now in its own chapel by that name in

¹³¹ Gerald Parsons, *Civil Religion and the Sienese* (Aldershot UK and Burlington USA: Ashgate, 2004), 1.

the cathedral and, ultimately, Duccio's grand *Maestà* (1308-1311), the magnificent double-sided, multi-paneled altarpiece, now partly dismantled and on show at the Museo. When the *Maestà* was finished, it was carried through the streets from the artist's house to the cathedral, ahead of a long procession led by the Bishop of Siena and followed by city dignitaries, including the full membership of the Nove, clergy, camarlengi, provisioners and executors of the city's financial magistracies. This event carries on to this day, on the Feast Day of the Assumption, 14 August, when the *Madonna del Voto* is again taken around in the *Corteo dei Ceri*, an elaborate procession, with many of the participants dressed in medieval or Renaissance costumes while the civic authorities bring candles and banners, thereby continuing to emphasize the Virgin's civic role.¹³²

It is no surprise that the magistrates of the Biccherna and the Gabella, whose Camarlengi held the most important civic position in the commune after the Podestà, were looking for representations of the Virgin Mary on the covers of their account books. Two panels dealt with in this chapter appear to be conventional religious scenes. Neither shows the Virgin as Queen of Heaven or Queen of Siena. Therefore, the thesis would be confirmed in its effort to show that the officials of the Treasury offices aspired to imitate images that were on show elsewhere in the city for the covers of their account books and would be well-known to the people. That in itself is a civic ambition.

The second panel dealt with in this chapter is possibly the clearest representation of an earlier well-known work in the city, this time with distinctive secular iconography and copied by its commissioners for its strong allusion to the civic principles of the city

¹³² Parsons, *Civil Religion*, xiv.

state. This panel, *The Common Good (Ben Comun)*, dated 1344, represents in the strongest terms the allegorical ideology of a state run by Justice, for the prosperity and peace of the Sienese people (Fig.17). Covering the second semester, July to December, it was attributed to Ambrogio Lorenzetti, executed in tempera on wood and measures 41.8 x 24.7cm. It is held at the Sienese State Archives. The motif of the Ruler in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco of *Good Government*, 1337-1340, in the Palazzo Pubblico's Sala dei Nove was undoubtedly the prototype that lent its iconography to this panel's important display of the city's aspirations. The cover borrows all of that work's allegorical symbolism of justice and power. It also depicts a strong reference to the Virgin Mary as Protectress of the city state.

Before dealing with the image's figurative iconography, it is prudent to again first deal with that of the names in the inscription.

LIBRO DELL'ENTRATA E DELL'ESCITA DE LA GENERALE CABELLA DEL COMUNE DI SIENA
DA CHALENDE LULGLIO INFINO A KLENDE GENNAIO ANNI MCCCXLIIII ANNO DEPTO AL
TENPO DI DO[N] FRANCESCHO MINUCCI, MONACO DI SAN GALGANO, CHAMARLENGO
E BINDO PETRUCCI, GIOVANI DI MEIO BALDINOTTI, MINO D'ANDREOCO, SIGNIORI
ESEGUITORI DELLA DETTA CABELLA DEL DETTO TENPO.

which translated reads:

BOOK OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF THE GENERAL GABELLA OF THE COMMUNE
OF SIENA DATED JULY UNTIL JANUARY OF THE YEAR MCCCXLIIII OF THAT YEAR AT THE
TIME OF DON FRANCESCHO MINUCCI, MONK OF SAN GALGANO, CAMARLENGO AND
BINDO PETRUCCI, GIOVANI DI MEIO BALDINOTTI, MINO D'ANDREOCO, LORDS
EXECUTORS OF THAT GABELLA AT THAT TIME.

However, as before, when we look at Bichi's entry for this panel in his 1724 register for Gabella covers, we see that while the Camarlengo is correctly referred to as Don Francesco di MINUCCI, Monaco di San Galgano, there is no heraldry for this name on the panel, which is unusual. Borgia's section on Heraldry gives the arms for this name

as *blue, showing the head and neck of a golden stag*. Maria Ilari lists the name (also Minicucci) as from Florence: of the Fonda Minucci or Fondaminucci. She lists the family as members of the Nove and refers to SCOTTI and PIPINI as alternative family names.¹³³ Bichi then continues with the record of a scribe by the name of Agniolo di LOTTO, a name not mentioned on the panel.

As Executors, Bichi records Bindo di Petruccio FORTEGUERRI. This last name does not appear on the panel. Borgia, however, records the heraldry for this name as *silver and blue banding, with a red border*. He records this name as an alias.¹³⁴ Maria Ilari lists the name as from Lucca, but she does not refer to an official position or class. The next important addition to the original text in Bichi's register is the name of Giovanni di Meio Baldinotti de' MIGNANELLI, the last name again an important addition to the original text on the panel. Borgia records the heraldry of this family as *gold ground with pattern of eight small grey characters and a diagonal red band*.¹³⁵ The Mignanelli were a distinguished merchant family with significant agricultural interests and land holdings in the Sienese contado and will be dealt with more closely in the next case study. Lastly, Bichi records Mino d'Andreuccio RANUCCINI. As with the other names, this last important patronym is not recorded on the panel. Borgia lists the heraldry as *red fond, diagonally crossed by a gold band, with three crescents*.¹³⁶

It is clear that without Galgano Bichi's eighteenth century efforts, we would not now have access to the family names of the three Executors, who signed off on this

¹³³ "d'azzurro alla testa e collo di cervo d'oro. Borgia, *Le Biccherno*, 352; Ilari, *Famiglie...*, no page number.

¹³⁴ "fasciato d'argento e d'azzurro, con la bordura di rosso". Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 346.

¹³⁵ "fasciato d'oro e di viaio di otto pezzi (more than eight!), alla banda di rosso attraversante". Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 335.

¹³⁶ "di rosso, alla sbarra d'oro, caricata di tre crescenti d'azzurro, posti nel senso della pezza". Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 356.

Gabella cover. Nor would we know the name of the scribe, as he does not appear at all.

The iconography of the figurative image on this panel arguably refers most convincingly to the allegorical representation in the frescoes of *Good and Bad Government* and its political ideas. In those, the City of Siena is personified by the Ruler, who rules through virtues of, among others, Justice and Concordia, achieving the *Common Good*. The type of the enthroned Ruler (Figs. 18 and 19) was a palimpsest of Greek, Byzantine and Roman iconography and their political-philosophical programmes, a concept much on the mind of the people in charge, the regime of the Nove. Although the formal execution of the figure of the Ruler on this Gabella cover slightly differs from that in the frescoes, his symbolism is entirely claimed from its prototype. Therefore, the iconography of the she-wolf feeding her cubs would appear to be a direct reference to Roman legend, likely to have originated from Siena itself, for instance from the *Breves officialium communis senensis* of 1250, originally written in Latin but, like the *Civic Constitution* of 1262, translated into the vernacular in 1309, all of which were compiled by Siena's Governors.¹³⁷ Siena's state officials prided themselves on the display of this latter document, hanging by a nail in the offices of the Gabella and the Biccherna and, therefore, clearly and intentionally on public display and available to audiences that would also be familiar with the frescoes. In this way the didactic, as well as exemplary significance of the frescoes was clearly emphasized in the Gabella panel.

The depiction of the Virgin Mary on the shield turns this Gabella cover into an icon, an allusion to power and a significant re-iteration of her importance as Protectress of

¹³⁷ Norman, *Siena, Florence and Padua*, 156.

the City, secularizing her position and working closely with the Ruler's Justice. Most notable in terms of the significance of this Treasury cover is to find that paying taxes is also equated with Justice in a well-run and equal society. The following quotation refers directly to the way this panel must be understood and appears to be entirely appropriate for the cover of taxation account books:

“This holy Virtue [Justice], where she rules, induces to unity the many souls [of citizens], and they, gathered together for such a purpose, make the Common Good [Ben Comun] their Lord; and he, in order to govern his state, chooses never to turn his eyes from the resplendent faces of the Virtues who sit around him. *Therefore, to him in triumph are offered taxes, tributes and lordship of towns*; therefore, without war, every civic result duly follows – useful, necessary, and pleasurable.”¹³⁸

The Ruler's image has strong classical iconographic symbolism. Enthroned like a Byzantine Emperor in a hieratic pose, he is depicted crowned, with a sceptre in his right hand, in reference to Siena's legendary past with roots in the Antique. He is dressed in black and white, Siena's colours as displayed in her heraldic Balzana. In fact, Boucheron has pointed out that the Ruler's head cover is not a crown, but rather the vair-lined [fur-lined] hat of a Podestà.¹³⁹ The red cloth of honour, draped over the throne, is Siena's third symbolic colour, often associated with the people. He is depicted resting his feet on the she-wolf and her cubs, the twins Aschius and Senus, sons of the twin Remus, symbol of her legendary Roman past. The Remus cubs are seen to be nourished, physically and emotionally, by their mother the she-wolf. While

¹³⁸ Square brackets by Diana Norman. Diana Norman, “‘Love Justice, you who judge the earth’: the paintings of the Sala dei Nove in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena,” in *Siena, Florence and Padua...*, 145-168, 167.

¹³⁹ Patrick Boucheron, “Turn your eyes to behold Her, you who are governing, who is portrayed here – Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco of Good Government”, in *Cairn Electronic Distribution for Editions de L'E.H.E.S.S.* (Cairn Info, 2005/6), 1-49, 13.

they help themselves to her milk and are lovingly licked by her, they represent the well-being engendered by a well-run state, where Justice prevails.

This Gabella cover undoubtedly achieves this thesis' research objective to show derivative iconography from other major works in and around Siena and elsewhere. While the main motifs of the Ruler and the she-wolf and cubs were transferred, there appear to be some important changes, made to suit the singular and specific designation of a civic Treasury panel. Its depiction of the Ruler's shield differs from that held by Ambrogio's Ruler in the fresco, in that it does not appear to include text around its edge. Instead, the designation C.S.C.V. (Civitas Senarum Civitas Virginis) appears at the top of the panel. However, the text arranged around the edge of the Ruler's shield on the Palazzo's fresco reads: SALVET VIRGO SENAM VETEREM QUAM SIGNAT AMOENAM (May the Virgin preserve Siena, the ancient, whose loveliness may she seal), in accordance with that on the original ancient 12th century civic seal (Fig. 20). This may just have been a necessity caused by lack of space. However, by the additional absence of the theological cardinal virtues, important in Lorenzetti's frescoes, its iconography appears to have become more adaptable to civic ideals. Could we, therefore, argue that, while much of the meaning in the Palazzo frescoes' images has been transferred to it, this Gabella cover possesses some iconography in its own right? The iconography of the frescoes, known to the public as a manifestation of the need to strive for *Ben Comun*, needed to be transferred to a vehicle with a different destination, namely that of an account book in the Treasury office. Subject to different production processes and handling concerns, the Magistracy would still successfully get its message across.

The primary act in the commissioning of this panel clearly was a repeat of the prototype, as has been the case in all case studies in this dissertation. In order to add to the essential meaning of the figurative part of this Gabella panel and find out why this iconographic transfer took place, we must combine the critical paradigm with the other methodology applied here, namely that of the social history of art. It is through this repetition that the political agenda emerges. In order to place it more securely in its time through the study of patronage we see that, in 1339, Ambrogio Lorenzetti completed his allegorical frescoes in the Palazzo Pubblico, in which the Biccherna and Gabella offices were also housed. The Gabella panel under discussion was completed in 1344, the same year that Ambrogio painted an *Annunciation* for that very Gabella office (now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena). The artist was, therefore, active in the Palazzo for several consecutive years and much involved in projects that were clearly meant to attract audiences to the main efforts of the government, those of establishing firm rule, emphasis on Justice and the veneration of the Virgin Mary, their Protectress.

The financial and economic difficulties during the 1340s and the stabilising effect that was achieved by the Nove's rule are well-documented by Bowsky. Arguably, the panel is, therefore, a direct reference to the wish of the members of the Nove to be identified with the embodiment of Good Government, in this way emphasizing its secular nature. The panel would appear to be an example of an instance where its commission, as well as its proposed propagandist image, may have been influenced by the voice of the Esecutore instead of the Camarlengo, who was a Cistercian monk. They all belonged to the most important and wealthy members of Sienese society, with interests in the contado, as is clear by Bichi's revelation of their proper family

names. As Bowsky tells us, these names represented a large section of landownership and farming activities in the surrounding contado.¹⁴⁰ It could be argued that their interests in a rapid turn-around of the Sienese economy and resulting financial security may have influenced the choice of officers presiding and signing off the books. This security was gained through indirect taxation, receipts by means of the Gabelle (the income from mostly external resources, such as foodstuffs, water, grain, forestry, etc.). The word propaganda, albeit not a popular one in the Sienese narrative of statecraft, would be appropriate here. The people had access to both tax offices in the Palazzo Pubblico and, by seeing the Treasury books and their covers, would have been reminded of their duty to pay tax in accordance with ability, a notion in support of Justice and the Common Good, as imposed by the Ruler in the inscription cited above. It is important, therefore, to understand the image on this Gabella cover as a significant reference to Sienese statecraft - a political, as well as philosophical message to a wide audience, in that unique civic religiosity that was so prevalent and promoted in the Siena of the period. That the officers whose signatures appear on the panel on this occasion (but whose family names might never have been known to us) may have had vested interests in the good functioning of the city state through taxation, may not have been a coincidence.

The third panel in this chapter is executed by Luca di Tommè, entitled *The Presentation in the Temple*, alternatively *The Circumcision* (Fig. 21). It is dated 1357 and produced several years after the first devastating visitation on Siena of the Black Death in 1348 and two years into a new form of government. It measures 43.4 x 29.4 cm and is held at the Sienese State Archives.

¹⁴⁰ Bowsky, "Buon Governo...", 372.

Like the previous two panels, it is a perfect example of how the commissioners of Biccherna and especially Gabella covers took as their new narrative iconographical examples of major works on display in other locations in the city (Fig. 22).¹⁴¹ In that way emphasis was placed on progress and development by replicating those works. The panel also allows for a more in-depth treatment of two signatories and subsequent highlighting of an interesting connection to another major contemporary commission attributed to Ambrogio Lorenzetti, which shall be shown.

Although there can be no doubt that this cover's figurative iconography copies that of Ambrogio's *Presentation in the Temple* created in 1342, a panel of the *Crescentius Altarpiece* in the newly refurbished transept of the Duomo, the image's importance had already been contextualised earlier on the front predella of Duccio's *Maestà*, in 1311. By its central position in a row of Old Testament prophets, underneath the main panel depicting the Virgin and Child, that panel has been the subject of debate in support of its eucharistic iconography (Fig. 23).¹⁴² This shall be dealt with.

First, like before, we deal with the question whether this commission might have been influenced by one of the Executors, with positive results. Up to this time, it had been customary for the Gabella books to be signed off by only three Executors. However, as Enzo Carli has shown, this was increased to four by the middle of the fourteenth century, to accommodate ambitious job-seeking after the plague.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ The relatively successful regime of the Nine (the Nove) came to an end in 1355 and was succeeded by that of the Dodici (1355-1368), who became instrumental in restarting and completing the major works of refurbishment in the Duomo.

¹⁴² Norman, *Siena, Florence and Padua*, 'A Noble Panel', 55-83.

¹⁴³ Carli, *Le Tavolette...*, 12.

QUESTO E LIBRO DE L'ENTRATA E DE L'ESCITA DELLA GIENERALE CHABELLA DEL
 COMUNO DI SIENA AL TENPO DE' SAVI UOMINI GIOVANNI DI PETRO MIGNANELI
 CAMARLENGO E DI LORENCO DI MINO UGHETI E DI VENTURA D'ANDREA E
 CIANPOLETO DI MISERE VANNI UGURUGIERI E DI MISERE GIOVANNI DI NERI DEL
 FORGIA DE SALINBENI SINGNORI ASEGUITORI DE LA DETA GABELA INCOMINCANDO IN
 CALENDE GENAIO ANNO M C.C.C.L.D.I.FINENDO IN CALENDE LUGLIO ANNO
 M.C.C.C.L.D.II ISCRITO PER FREDI DI [PONE] DI CHIATI ISCRITORE D'ESA GABELA DEL
 DETO TENPO]

which translated reads as:

THIS IS THE BOOK OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF THE GENERAL GABELLA OF THE
 COMMUNE OF SIENA DURING THE TIME OF THE LORD GIOVANNI DI PETRO
 MIGNANELI CAMARLENGO AND OF LORENZO DI MINO D HETI (a) AND OF VENTURA
 D'ANDREA AND CIAMPOLETO OF MISTER VANNI UGURUGIERI AND OF MISTER
 GIOVANNI OF NERI DEL FORGIA DE SALINBENI THE LORDS EXECUTORS OF THIS
 GABELLA STARTING JANUARY ANNO MCCCLDI AND ENDING JULY ANNO MCCCLDII
 WRITTEN BY [FREDI DI PONE DI CHIATI SCRIBE OF THIS GABELLA DURING THIS TIME]
 (b)

(a) covered by overpainted margins, therefore illegible. (b) covered by paint

Luigi Borgia confirms the heraldry. He lists the coats-of-arms as follows: UGHETTI,
*red, with five diagonal twinned bands and twelve gold roses, grouped as two, four,
 four, two below and above;*¹⁴⁴ VENTURI, *on gold with a blue band, accompanied by
 three five-leaf clovers also in blue, two placed in the top and one below in the point;*¹⁴⁵
 UGURGHIERI, *on gold, with a red wheel supported by two blue lion and accompanied in
 the point by a third lion of the same colour;*¹⁴⁶ and lastly, SALIMBENI, *on red, with three
 gold lozenges, two above and one below.*¹⁴⁷ Strangely, although his name appears, the
 arms for the Camarlengo, Giovanni di Pietro MIGNANELLI, do not appear on this panel.

¹⁴⁴ "di rosso, a cinque gemelle in banda, accompagnata di dodici rose, disposte due, quattro, quattro, due, il tutto d'oro",
 Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 370.

¹⁴⁵ "d'oro, alla fascia d'azzurro, accompagnata da tre cinquefoglie dello stesso, poste due nel capo e una nella punta", Borgia,
Le Biccherno..., 371.

¹⁴⁶ "d'oro, alla ruota di rosso sostenuto da due leoni d'azzurro, e accompagnata nella punta da un terzo leone dello stesso",
 Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 370.

¹⁴⁷ "di rosso, a tre losanghe d'oro disposte due e una", Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 363.

Although a scribe is mentioned in the inscription, there is no further reference to him but the name Fredi di Pone di Chiati.¹⁴⁸

The MIGNANELLI were closely linked to the BALDINETTI and part of the nobility. Here Bowsky helps with more important information. As mentioned in the previous case study, the Mignanelli were a distinguished merchant family with significant agricultural interests and land holdings in the Sienese contado. He deals with their voluntary loans to the Commune, in the form of rental of property in the contado from the mid-1340s.¹⁴⁹ However, as a consequence of plague deaths and subsequent migration, a lot of land lay sterile, as there were no labourers to work it. This resulted in the Commune's government receiving many requests for contracts to be rescinded, requests that were generally granted to private individuals, as well as to groups renting communal properties. On 14 August 1349 (one year after the plague), several Sienese Mignanelli, who had rented the entire court, district, land and castle of Marsiliana, beginning 1 January 1348, for £5,950 at the rate of £850 a year, petitioned for the cancellation of this contract. They argued that, as a result of the plague, successful use of this territory would no longer be viable, nor could it be guarded from Siena's enemies, should the need arise. Two of the original renters had died and there would not be the men to serve as either guards or agricultural labourers. In this instance, we find this family in the contado, a fact that could simply be justified by their wish to get out of the city, where the risk of infection was so much greater. However, to find a Mignanelli as one of the Executors on a Gabella cover could indicate their involvement

¹⁴⁸ Carli, *Le Tavolete...*, 42. The name Pone was identified by him.

¹⁴⁹ Bowsky, "Impact...", 1-34, 24.

in agricultural activities, such as for instance grain production, which would make them more likely to serve as Gabella officers in the government.

It is when dealing with the last signatory on this Gabella cover that a sudden connection presents itself to the earlier mentioned Tofo di Pico/Piecho/Pierho and the Salimbeni family. Based on documentary references by Eve Borsook, we now find evidence that Tofo may have been the father of Vanni Salimbeni, who, in a will dated 1 June 1340, now held at the Sienese State Archives, makes a bequest to the Cistercian monks of the Abbey of San Galgano, for a chapel to be built adjacent to the Rotunda on Montesiepi (the reliquary of the sword) and for this chapel to be beautifully painted (*“una pulcerima cappella de labidibus bene conciis et cum voltis et bene picta”*).¹⁵⁰

Extensively dealt with by Maria Ceppari, we already know that Tofo was a wealthy member of Sienese trecento society. Additionally, Bowsky, when dealing with the task of finding names and occupations for members of the Nine, finds a strong banking and mercantile connection with Tofo's name, by consulting a list of members of the Merchant Guild.¹⁵¹ Anne Dunlop and Diana Norman, when further dealing with dating, patronage and iconography of the Galgano frescoes, both use the will as a basis for their arguments. This would, therefore, indicate that *“Vanni Forgja, son of the late Lord Tofo of the Salimbeni of Siena”* was the patron and commissioner of the chapel and its frescoes and the signatory on the 1357 panel was his grandson and universal heir.¹⁵² Borsook's evidence for 1340 as the preferred date for allowing the work to be tied to this bequest, is corroborated by Diana Norman.¹⁵³ She names the writer of the

¹⁵⁰ Eve Borsook, *Gli Affreschi di Montesiepi con annotazioni tecniche di Leonetto Tintori* (Florence: 1969), 11, n. 1.

¹⁵¹ Bowsky, *“Buon Governo...”*, 374, n.26.

¹⁵² Anne Dunlop, *“Once more on the Patronage of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's Frescoes of San Galgano, Montesiepi,”* in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 63 (2000): 387-403.

¹⁵³ Diana Norman, *“The Commission for the frescoes of Montesiepi,”* in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 56 (1993): 290, 291.

will as *Vanni 'Forgia', son of the late Lord Tofo of the Salimbeni of Siena*, its most powerful family during the trecento.¹⁵⁴ The signatory inscription on the subject Gabella cover for the fourth Executor reads MISERE GIOVANNI DI NERI DEL FORGIA DE SALINBENI. This name would, therefore, refer to Vanni's grandson, who was named in the will. Date-wise this is entirely possible, as Tofo is known to have served on the Biccherna in 1323 and 1326, as shown. Vanni, Tofo's son, drew up this will on his deathbed in 1340. Vanni's own son, Neri, was already deceased and Neri's son (Giovanni di Neri) is, therefore, the Salimbeni who appears on this 1357 Gabella cover. In addition to the building and embellishment of the chapel, Vanni stated that the revenue from his farm at San Pietro (this may explain the earlier references to Tofo di Pierho, or Piero), south-west of Siena and in close vicinity to the Abbey, be additionally used for payment for one of the monks to be appointed to celebrate masses in perpetuity, recommending Vanni's soul and that of his deceased son Neri to *God, the Virgin, Galgano and the whole celestial court*. Four measures of grain per annum from his farm were to be paid to the monks as a stipend. Vanni's grandson Giovanni was named his universal heir.¹⁵⁵

Staying close to the will, Diana Norman suggests how a powerful patron such as Vanni Salimbeni would have been able to hire perhaps the most successful artist at the time, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, to carry out the work in the chapel. She develops her argument of patronage by reference to other Salimbeni financial bequests and highlights their prominent positions in government. Bowsky also refers to a Vanni (short for Giovanni) Salimbeni, who contributed 118.000 gold florins toward hiring a

¹⁵⁴ Norman, "The Commission...", 290.

¹⁵⁵ Norman, "The Commission...", 291.

mercenary army for the battle of Montaperte in 1260. He also found that they were rivals of the Tolomei, but through intervention on the part of Giovanni were reconciled. They were influential in banking, commerce and government and possessed large contado holdings, amongst which nine castles. Bowsky specifically refers to their farming the Gabella of meats in 1312.¹⁵⁶

One last reference to the names on the 1357 Gabella panel re-emphasizes their ambiguity: Galgano Bichi's entry appears to show significant differences (Fig.24). The reason for this is unknown.

There can be no doubt that this Gabella panel copied its prototype in the Duomo, which was painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Not only that, but one of its signatories, a member of the important Salimbeni family has been shown to have been the patron and commissioner of a fresco cycle attributed to the same artist in the Rotonda chapel on Montesiepi. These findings link this panel to its prototype and its artist in terms of patronage.

Arguably, apart from Giovanni's potential family history with Ambrogio Lorenzetti, a further reason why the Duomo panel was copied 15 years after its execution is that, at that time, the Lorenzetti panel was the subject of major discussions between the government and the Head of Works at the Duomo, in respect of the relocation of the altar it was to be placed on, as shown by Monika Butzek.¹⁵⁷ She deals with important changes in the discussions in respect of the new location and physical placement of the altars in the main cathedral when, in 1357 (the date of our panel), the new Government of the Dodici decided to dismiss for good the Nove's ambitious plans for

¹⁵⁶ Bowsky, *Medieval...*, 18, 65, 165, 211, 301.

¹⁵⁷ Butzek, "Le Pali...", 40.

the enlargement of the Duomo and instead to continue the refurbishment work for the new Baptistery, a project that had been dropped in 1317.¹⁵⁸ Eventually, it is not until 1362 that a long planning period comes to an end and a decision on the permanent placement in the transept is finally made.¹⁵⁹ This will have been a topical issue in the religious lives of the people, widely publicized and discussed. In this way, the depiction of this important scene in the life of the Virgin on a Gabella cover can, therefore, be seen as an effort on the part of its commissioners (especially one of the signatories) to emulate existing trecento works elsewhere, in accordance with this thesis' research aims.

As debated by several scholars, notably Michael Baxandall, there is a relation between art and the period in which it is produced.¹⁶⁰ Bowsky's social historical approach describes how from the 1340s Siena's decline through a period of deeply disturbing events and political instability provoked a social, moral and cultural crisis, with economic failure and unrest. The 1348 plague and subsequent famine resulted in fear and a sense of guilt. The Sienese people thought they were punished for their sins. When in 1355 the regime of the Nove finally collapsed after 68 years of relative stability and prosperity, the new attitudes and insecurities were reflected in a return to the Church.¹⁶¹ In addition, the plague created a renewed desire to appease what the Sienese experienced as divine wrath.¹⁶² This resulted in religious processions, promises to build churches, financial bequests to monasteries, where the highest percentage of

¹⁵⁸ Butzek, "Le Pali...", 44.

¹⁵⁹ Butzek, "Le Pali...", 47, n. 60.

¹⁶⁰ Michael Baxandall, *Painting & Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 2nd ed. II, *The Period Eye* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 29-103.

¹⁶¹ Bowsky, "The Impact...", 14, 16.

¹⁶² Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death: The Arts, Religion and Society in the Mid-Fourteenth Century* (Chichester, UK: Princeton University Press, 1951). Harper and Row, Torchbook Edition (1964), 16-26.

deaths had occurred, the latter resulting in the renewed appointment of lay merchants to the position of Camarlengo (as is the case in this subject panel), as there simply were no monks left.¹⁶³

In dealing with the iconography of this Gabella panel and bearing in mind the comments made by Bowsky, Borgia, Tomei and Millard Meiss, an opportunity appears to arise to acknowledge these enormous changes, which took place during the fifteen years since the execution of its prototype. The writer has been tempted to follow this notion and perceive the iconography in this case study as a re-interpretation of its prototype by one of its artist's young followers, not by diverting the argument of the main thesis, but rather to show another approach to it.¹⁶⁴

In a visual analysis and comparison of the two images, there would appear to be evidence of a change from the relative serenity in the iconography of Ambrogio's Duomo panel to the anxiety of Luca di Tommè's Gabella panel, probably executed at the beginning of his career (Figs. 25 and 26). Luca's emphasis is on the behaviour of the Christ child, frightened by the sombre, bearded prophet Simeon and reaching with both hands for his anxious mother, who leaps forward to take him. Where in the Duomo panel Joseph, his father, purveys the scene in relative calm, in the Gabella cover he displays anguish and fear and looks as though he wants to break out of the scene. In the Duomo panel, the Virgin willingly presents the child to the prophet and submits to his wish to hold him. The baby is lying peacefully in his arms, while the old woman, Anne, looks on. The emphasis in the Gabella cover is arguably on the act of sacrifice about to be performed in the forefront of the image, which may be seen as a reflection of the recent serious sacrifices the Sienese people have had to make and an

¹⁶³ Bowsky, "The Impact...", 14, 15, 16.

¹⁶⁴ Borgia, *Le Biccherno...*, 108; Tomei, *Le Biccherno...*, 158.

emphasis on renewed pre-occupation with ritual. The artist's effort to create meaning in a communicative scene in a horizontal plane, close to the picture plane, takes away the distraction of Lorenzetti's background features of the temple's architectural recessive perspective and brings into focus the sacrificial act of circumcision.¹⁶⁵ While this adaptation of the formal composition could simply be the result of reduction in available space, that restriction does not appear to have had that effect on many other Treasury panels. The argument is emphasized by the figure of Joseph, whose halo protrudes past and in front of the slender column on the left, thereby giving the impression that his body's complete right-hand side is situated in front of the picture plane, as if he is too distressed to stay in the scene (Fig. 27). Even the High Priest looks doubtful and sad (Fig. 28).

Panofsky's interpretation at an intrinsic or tertiary level of biblical or allegorical meaning in the Duomo panel is achieved by two ritualistic events and would be received by their audiences as such. The Virgin's re-introduction into the Temple, 40 days after childbirth leads to her presentation and purification and Christ's circumcision. However, it could be argued that the perceived transfer of this iconography to the Gabella cover allowed it to work in an additional way. The sacrificial character of the motive of *The Presentation in the Temple* and its clear reference to Christ's sacrifice (and the Virgin's implied fear in this respect) had already been noted by scholars in its example in the front predella of Duccio's *Maestà*. As suggested by John White, in his reconstruction of this well-known altarpiece and corroborated by Diana Norman, the placement of this scene, in the centre of the front predella, next to its prophet Malachi and below the main scene of the Virgin and Child,

¹⁶⁵ Tomei, *Le Biccherne...*, 158.

depicted the eucharistic sacrifice in the order of the Mass.¹⁶⁶ The sacrifice of the Sienese people could further be implied by the bird in the High Priest's hand, one wing black and the other white, the colours of the Balzana. The great loss of life, followed by famine and the demise, two years before, of a by then unpopular government, had created an entirely different society to the one fifteen years before and it is, therefore, not unlikely that the civic commissioners of this civic Gabella cover intended to emphasize this point, while retaining the Virgin Mary's protection. In addition to the prototype in the Duomo and Duccio's Maestà, the choice of the figurative image for this panel would appear to also have been informed by one widely produced elsewhere during the 14th century and placed in several church locations in Siena and beyond.¹⁶⁷

The ambiguity in respect of the Camarlengo, as shown above, makes it difficult to come to a secure conclusion as to his influence on the commission. It might not be too speculative to assume that, on this occasion, the iconography may have been considerably informed by the artist himself.

The panel was executed by Luca di Tommè, a close follower and admirer of Ambrogio Lorenzetti. He stayed close to Ambrogio's style, which at the time was considered to be the most beautiful created. After years of deliberation, Luca di Tommè was eventually chosen as the most likely artist to have painted this panel.¹⁶⁸ The synergy, therefore, worked at more than one level: the affinity between the two

¹⁶⁶ John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), quoted in Diana Norman, *Siena, Florence and Padua*, 73.

¹⁶⁷ Giovanni del Biondo (1364, now in the Academy in Florence), Taddeo Gaddi (around 1330, also in the Academy in Florence) and that of Bartolo di Fredi (around 1375, now in the Louvre, Paris), the latter basing his version of the scene on Ambrogio's *Presentation in the Temple* but, like Luca di Tommè, he made changes in perspective and formal representation of the figures, which arguably changed the iconography.

¹⁶⁸ Tomei..., 158.

artists, the grandfather Giovanni Salimbeni's possible admiration for Ambrogio's work and on his mind when he dictated his Will, but arguably also that of the grandson's affinity with Ambrogio's work, as well as with Luca, whom he may have known personally and whose commissioning he may have influenced. All this coincided with the liturgical re-thinking of the cathedral and its effect of refocusing attention on the 1342 Crescentius panel.

Interestingly, Gaetano Milanesi mentions Luca, together with Lippo Vanni (to whom this panel was attributed until as recently as the mid-1980s)¹⁶⁹, as members of the Supreme Council of the Republic (Supremo Magistrato della Repubblica) during July and August 1373 and again during September and October 1379.¹⁷⁰ We may, therefore, speculate that this later member of the government might have earlier in his life been inspired by the new government's ideals of renewed solidarity and prosperity for the City of Siena.

¹⁶⁹ Tomei ..., 158.

¹⁷⁰ Milanesi, Gaetano, "Breve dell'Arte de' Pittore e Miniature Senesi dell' Anno MCCCCLV", in *Documenti per la Storia dell'Arte Senese*, I, Secoli XIII e XIV (Siena: Presso Onorato Porri, 1854) 27, 28. Digitised by the Internet Archive, 2013.

CONCLUSION

The iconography of Biccherna covers has been cursorily dealt with in previous academic studies to demonstrate the strong contemporaneity of a specific saint or legend, or the importance of the Virgin Mary's veneration as Protectress of the City and her urban development. In these cases, the covers may have been used as additional examples, in the context of more significant or well-known other works and in order to argue matters of social class, economic and monetary aspects of trecento society. However, the iconography of the covers' own figurative images, or their signed and dated inscriptions, of particular significance as mirrors of society at any particular time over a period of roughly 400 years, has never been the subject of a comprehensive iconographical study.

This dissertation has dealt with five case studies to show how important iconographical changes affected the figurative display, from a static so-called office scene to a tendency to depict a new narrative scene. Therefore, instead of dealing with the covers in isolation when dealing with narrative, it is shown that they participated in a natural progression of Style in art of the Sienese trecento, moving from a reductive format to a more sophisticated one, recognizing trends in common, namely the development of perspective, the turn to volumetric representation and narrative - in a broader, recognizable convergence of art, commerce and public life. Additionally, an important archival study into the names and heraldry of the signatories in the inscriptions was carried out, in order to establish whether they could arguably have had an influence on the commission. While on a number of occasions in-depth research yielded enlightening and positive results, sadly there are occasions where the information has proven to be ambiguous, incomplete or incorrect, as suggested by

Agnolo, Bowsky and Maginnis.¹⁷¹ Therefore, these results showed this not to have been a productive line of enquiry and un-anticipated limitations should be acknowledged, rendering this result inconclusive. However, it would be more effective to think of the inscriptions not solely as information, but as part of the visual field taking up half of the composition. More than merely names, these blocks of text suggest, as with so much of Sienese art of the period, that works of art were the result of a social transaction, artistically valuable. Important is why the names had been published, not necessarily who was represented.

Chapter One dealt with the depictions of two important scenes from San Galgano's legend, a local saint whose cult became almost more important during the first part of the fourteenth century than that of the Virgin Mary. In dealing with the two case studies in this chapter, the strong connections with the Cistercian Abbey of San Galgano and her monastery were introduced. The monks became important personalities in Siena's religious and secular society. Their significant engineering and administrative capabilities enabled them to influence major decisions made by the Government of the Nine (the Nove, 1287-1355), during whose reign Siena experienced some of her most significant and prosperous developments. Both examples stayed close to the legend of the saint and a tentative hypothesis may be proposed that the Camarlengi in the first two scenes may have influenced the commission of these narratives.

Chapter Two dealt with panels which display the Sienese veneration of the Virgin Mary, as informed by important works of art displayed elsewhere in the city and beyond. The first case study, dated 1334, would appear to be a conventional religious

¹⁷¹ Cronaca Senese attribuita ad Agnolo di Tura del Grasso detta la cronaca maggiore, in *C.S.*, 547-548; Bowsky, *A Medieval...*, 75, 89; Maginnis, *The World...*, 241-242.

Nativity scene, in which a Cistercian monk appears as Camarlengo. This panel's figurative iconography strongly emphasizes the Virgin's important position in the city state.

The chapter's second panel, arguably the strongest depiction of Siena's civic religious tendencies, *The Common Good*, dated 1344, displays the Virgin Mary in her role as Queen of Siena and Protectress of the city, on the shield held by the Ruler. This confirms it to be another derivative image, namely that of possibly the most important secular fresco in the city, Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Allegories of Good and Bad Government*, 1337-1340, in the Palazzo Pubblico. The fact that the Camarlengo, Don Francesco Minucci, was a Galganian monk, emphasizes commitment to a just society before any philosophical or theological considerations.

The chapter's third panel, *The Presentation or Circumcision*, dated 1357, is undoubtedly a conventional religious scene and directly refers to that on display in the Duomo, as part of the *Crescentius Altarpiece*, executed by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in 1342. Possibly the cover's most important contribution to the thesis is the interesting connection found between one of its signatories, Vanni Salimbeni, and the patronage and commission of the frescoes in the Rotunda Chapel on Montesiepi. A potential re-interpretation of the figurative scene on this Gabella cover arguably emphasizes a strong sacrificial character.

The question as to whether a Camarlengo directly controlled the commissions is unclear, due to a lack of direct documentary evidence in the archives. His presence in the stance of a patron, which occurs in three of the five case studies would confirm it, if these were not monks and simply kneeling in veneration. As far as we know, the 1334 panel is the last that presents the Camarlengo as monk in this way. However, his name continues to appear in the inscriptions.

This thesis has also shown that sometimes the names revealed important information, *not* reflected in the figurative narrative, or its prototype. It could also be unrelated to the panel's date when, as seen in the fifth case study, this information was revealed by one of the Executors and not by the merchant Camarlengo. It is, therefore, more likely that the process was a combined effort. They all lived together during their term of office. The Camarlengo's task was to present the register to the Consiglio at the end of each six months' term. Likely, he made his recommendations on behalf of his colleagues. There is, so far, no evidence that proves otherwise. Most importantly, this thesis shows that the officials of the Treasury offices, in accordance with Siena's civic tradition, commissioned Biccherna and Gabella covers that imitated images that were on show elsewhere and that would be well-known to the people of the city. Finally, while asserting the aims of this thesis to show a change in the way the Camarlengo became involved in the figurative scene in a new narrative display, we note that, although this occurred for the first time in our panel of 1320, the iconographical change has been a gradual one and by no means eradicated the office scenes. These continued to be displayed until 1468, in Benvenuto di Giovanni (attr.), *The Finances of the Commune in times of Peace and War*. (Fig. 3). This dissertation deals with the first five extant narratives of this nature. That the narratives entered the scene, of that there is no doubt. In fact, the observation that the very first and last narrative scenes in Sienese Treasury covers (1320 and 1682) are both images of San Galgano is striking and rather gratifying.¹⁷² (Fig. 29) The Camarlengo in that last panel was not a Cistercian monk. The last monks left in 1652.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Cornice, *Speciosa...*, 50. The 1682 panel is a Biccherna quadro, now in the museum of the Siena State Archives (BC 87 ASS). The Camarlengo, Giovanni di Francesco Petroni, had been in that position since 1677.

¹⁷³ Dunlop, "Once more..." 387.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig. 1. Reconstruction of a bound thirteenth century Biccherna Register. Budapest, Museum of Fine Art.
Photo: Conservation Catalogue.

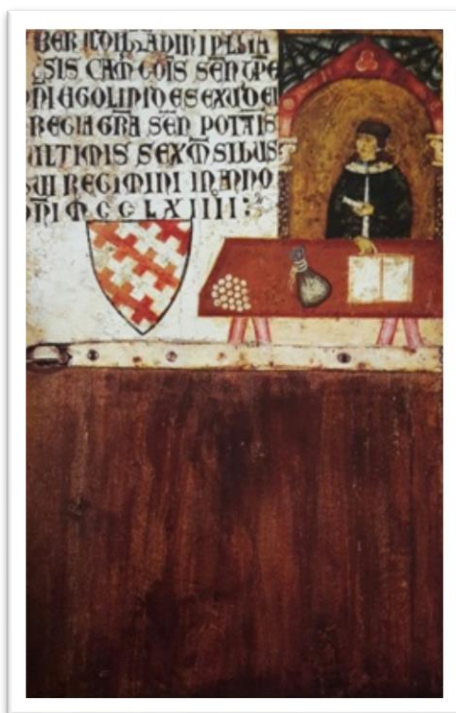


Fig. 2. Diotisalvi di Speme, *Ildebrandino Pagliaresi, Camarlengo*, 1264, tempera on wood, 36.4 x 24.2 cm. Siena State Archives.



Fig. 3. Benvenuto di Giovanni (attr.), *The Finances of the Commune in times of Peace and War*, 1468. Gabella quadro. Tempera and gold on wood, 53 x 38.8 cm, Siena State Archives.



Fig. 4. Guido Cinatti, *Don Stefano, monk of San Galgano, kneeling before the Saint*, 1320. Biccherna cover, tempera on wood, 38 x 25 cm, Siena State Archives.



Fig. 5. Guido Cinatti, *Don Stefano, monk of S. Galgano, kneeling before the Saint*, 1320, detail. Tempera on wood, Siena State Archives.



Fig. 6. Guido Cinatti, *Don Stefano, monk of San Galgano, kneeling before the Saint*, 1320, detail. Tempera on wood. Siena State Archives.



Fig. 7. Guido Cinatti (attr.), *The Punishment of the Envious*, 1326. Gabella cover, tempera on wood, 40 x 25 cm. Private Collection. Photo: Accademia dei Rozzi, Siena.

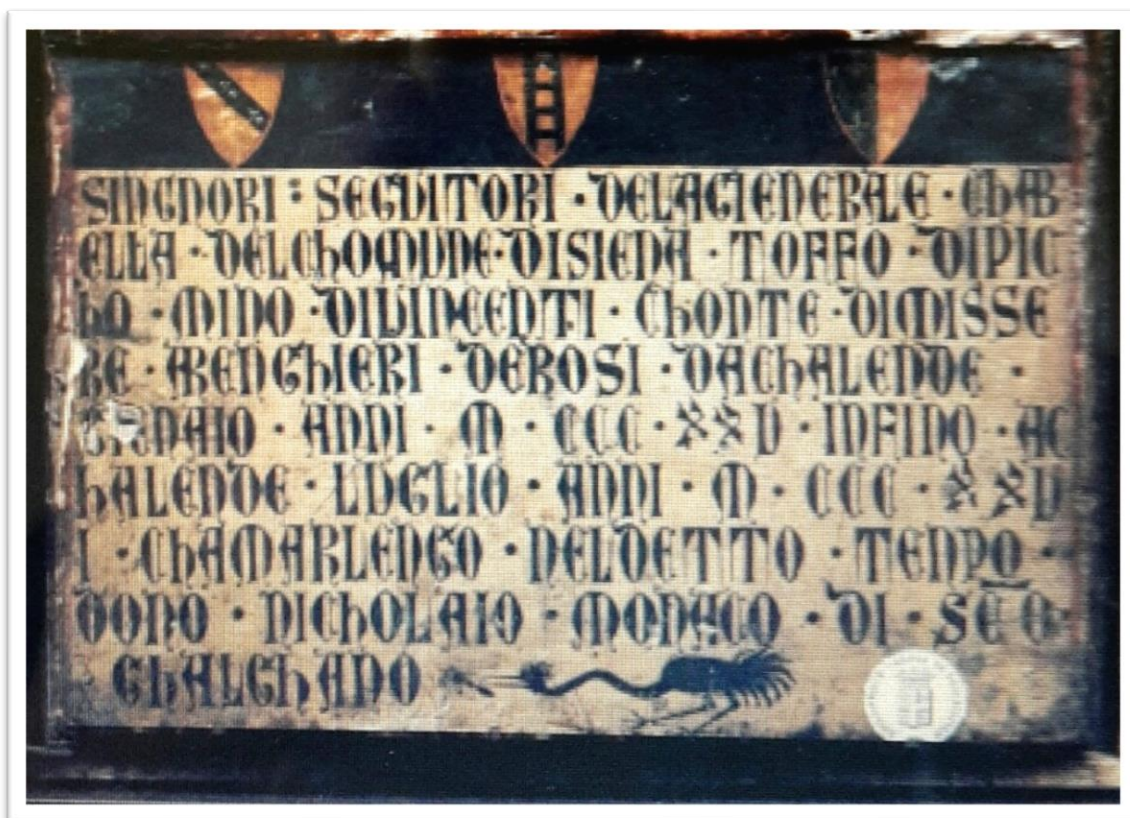


Fig. 8. Guido Cinatti (attr.), *The Punishment of the Envious*, 1326, detail. Tempera on wood. Private collection.
Photo: Accademia dei Rozzi, Siena.

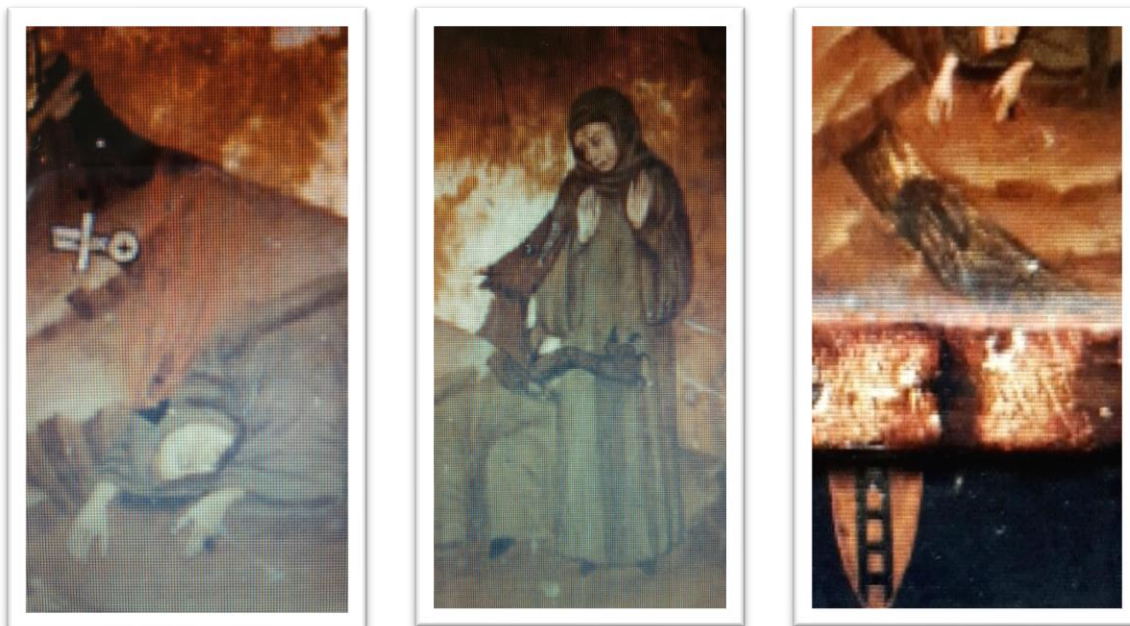


Fig. 9. Guido Cinatti, (attr.), *The Punishment of the Envious*, 1326, details of the three punishments: the bolt of lightning, the attack by the wolf and the drowning. Tempera on wood. Private collection.



Fig. 10. Artist unknown, *The Nativity*, 1334. Gabella panel, tempera on wood. 41 x 26.3 cm. Siena State Archives.

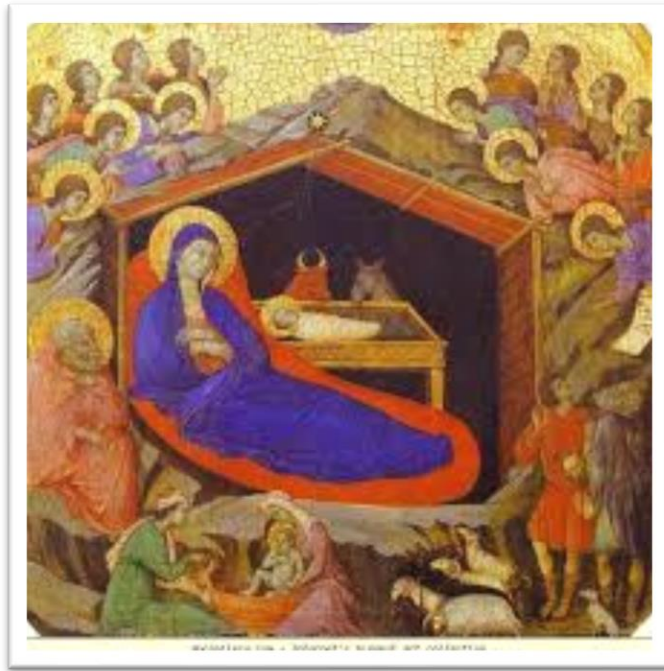


Fig. 11. Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Nativity, Maestà Altarpiece*, 1308-1311, front predella. Tempera on wood, approx. 44 x 43 cm. Museo dell' Opera Metropolitana del Duomo, Siena.

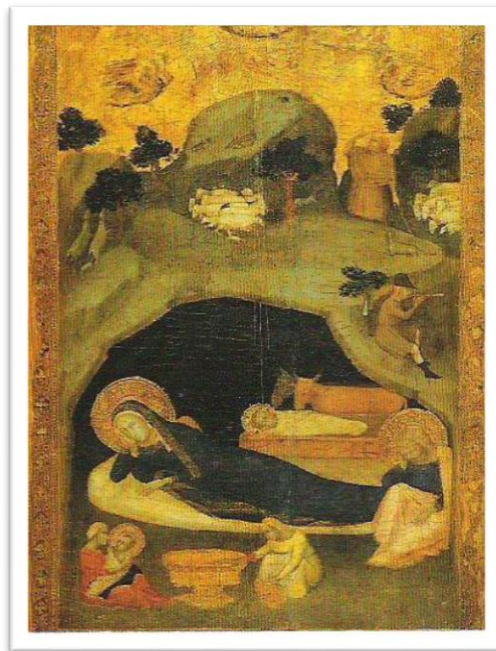


Fig. 12. Workshop Simone Martini, *The Nativity (La Nativité Italienne)*, 1340.
Panel in the *Avignon Polyptych*, tempera on wood, 54.4 x 38.1 cm.
Originally in the Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence, France. Now Metropolitan Museum, New York.

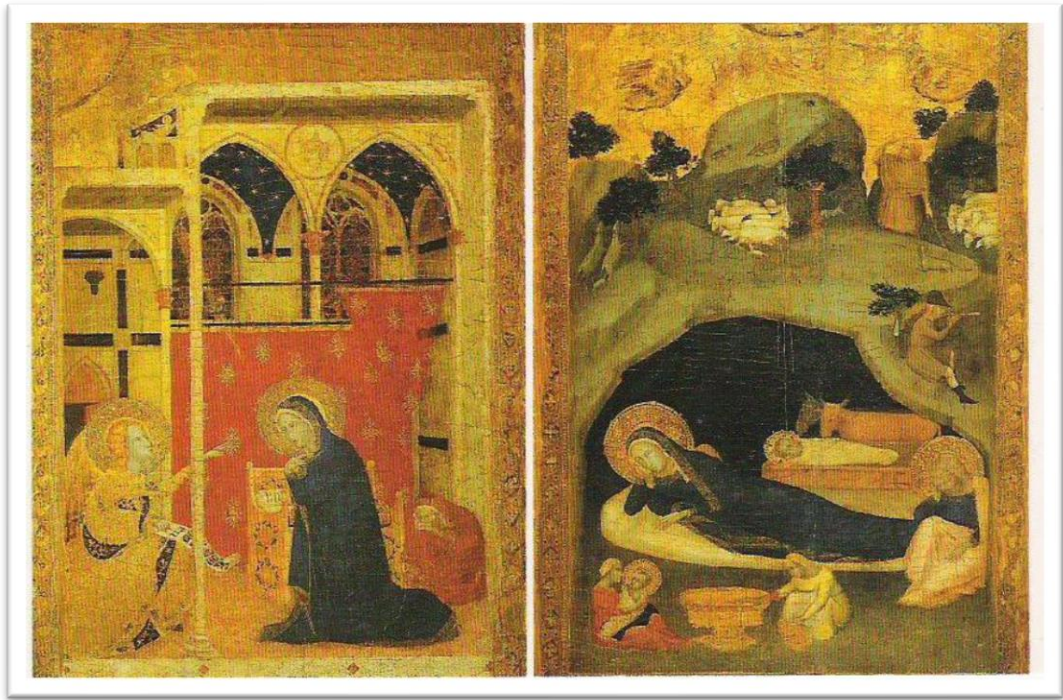


Fig. 13. Workshop Simone Martini, *The Annunciation* and *The Nativity*, 1340. Two panels as parts of the *Avignon Polyptych*, tempera on wood, 54.4 x 38.1 cm each. Metropolitan Museum, New York.



Fig. 14. *The Nativity*, panel in a series of panels, *The Twelve Feasts*, Constantinople, early 14th century. Miniature mosaic. Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence. Photo: John Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1979), 310.

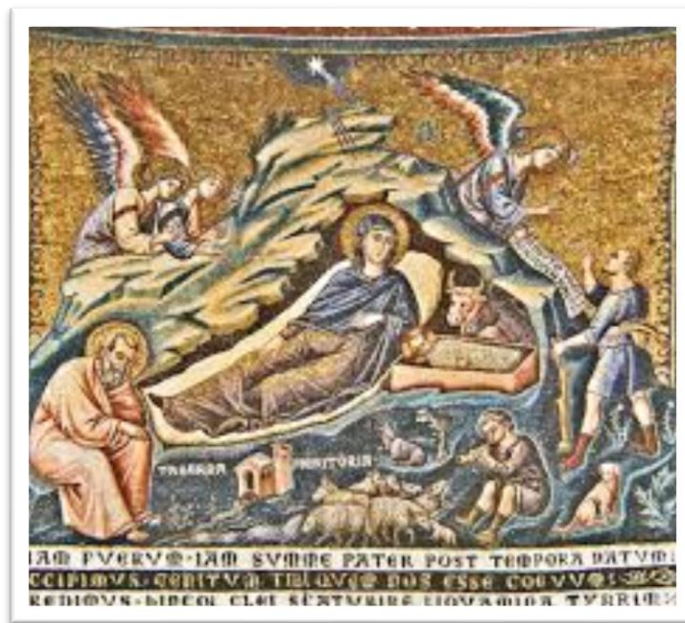


Fig. 15. Pietro Cavallini, *The Nativity, Images of the Life of the Virgin*, 1291. Absidal mosaic.
Basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome.



Fig. 16. Artist unknown, *Offering of the Keys*, 1483. Gabella quadro. Tempera on wood, 59.1 x 40 cm.
Siena State Archives.



Fig. 17. Ambrogio Lorenzetti (attr.), *The Common Good*, 1344. Gabella cover. Tempera on wood. Siena State Archives.



Fig. 18. Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The Allegory of Good Government*, 1337-1340. Detail of the Ruler. Fresco. Palazzo Pubblico, Sala dei Nove, Siena.



Fig. 19. Ambrogio Lorenzetti (attr.), *The Common Good*, 1344. Detail of the Ruler on a Gabella cover. Tempera on wood. Siena State Archives.



Fig. 20. Simone Martini, *Maestà*, 1315. Detail of a twelfth century Sienese civic seal, depicting the Virgin Mary as Queen of Siena, with Latin inscription. Lower border. Fresco. Sala del Mappamondo, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.



Fig. 21. Luca di Tommè, *The Presentation in the Temple*, 1357. Gabella cover. Tempera on wood, 43.4 x 29.4 cm, Siena State Archives.



Fig. 22. Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The Presentation in the Temple*, panel of the *Crescentius Altarpiece* for the Duomo, Siena, 1342. Tempera on wood with gold, 257 x 168 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

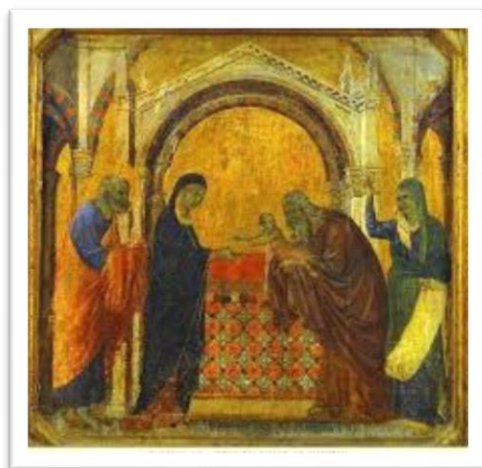


Fig. 23. Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Presentation*, *Maestà Altarpiece*, front predella, 1308-1311. Tempera on wood, 44 x 43 cm. Museo dell'Opera Metropolitana del Duomo, Siena. © Olga's Gallery.

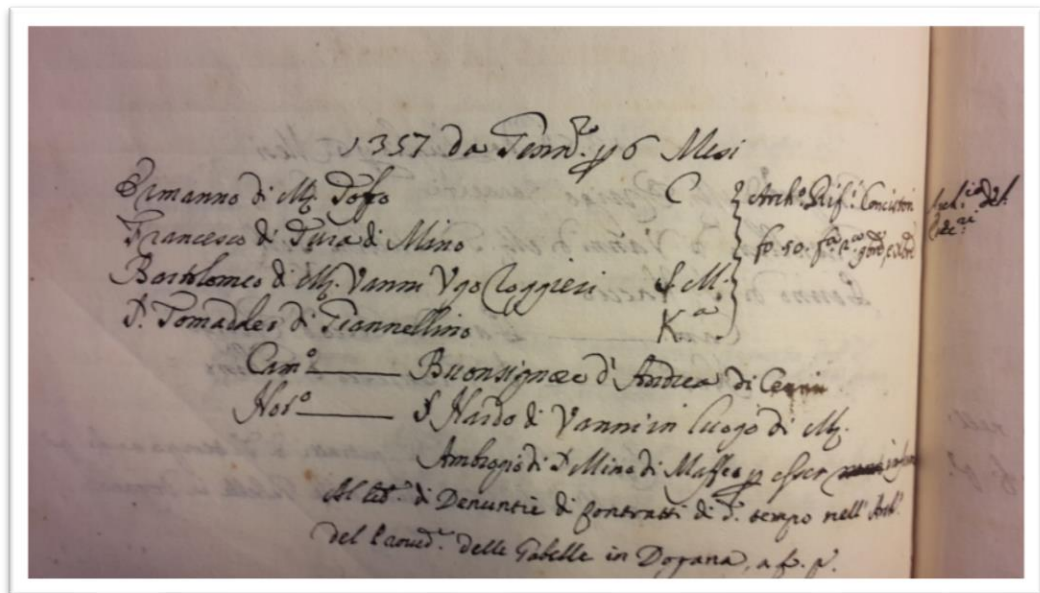


Fig. 24. Entry in Galgano Bichi's Register for Executors, 1724, of this 1357 Gabella cover. Black ink on parchment. Siena State Archives. Photo by author.



Fig. 25. Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The Presentation in the Temple*, 1342, detail. Tempera on wood with gold. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.



Fig. 26. Luca di Tommè, *The Presentation in the Temple/Circumcision*, detail, 1357. Gabella cover. Tempera on wood. Siena State Archives.



Fig. 27. Luca di Tommè, *The Presentation in the Temple*, 1357, detail. Gabella cover. Tempera on wood. Siena State Archives.



Fig. 28. Luca di Tommè, *The Presentation in the Temple*, 1357, detail. Gabella cover. Tempera on wood. Siena State Archives.



Fig. 29. Artist unknown, *San Galgano kneeling before the fixed sword*, 1682. Biccherna quadro. Oil on canvas. Siena State Archives.

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